

THE
HISTORY
OF
Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE

VOL. II.



THE
H I S T O R Y
OF

Lady Julia Mandeville.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By the TRANSLATOR of
LADY CATESBY'S LETTERS.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

VOL. II.

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MDCCLXV.



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE.

To Miss HOWARD.

Belmont, TUESDAY.

O EMILY! How inconsistent is a heart in love! I entreated Mr. Mandeville not to write to me, and am chagrined at his too exact obedience: I think, if he loved as I do, he could not so easily obey me. He writes to Lady Anne; and, though by my desire,

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I am

I am ashamed of my weakness;—but I wish he wrote less often: there is an air of gaiety in his letters which offends me—He talks of balls, of parties with ladies—Perhaps I am unjust, but the delicacy of my love is wounded by his knowing a moment's pleasure in my absence; to me all places are equal where he is not; all amusements without him are dull and tasteless. Have not I an equal right to expect, Emily! He knows not how I love him.

Convinced that this mutual passion is the designation of Heaven to restore him to that affluence he lost by the partiality of an ancestor and the generous loyalty of his family, I give way to it without reserve; I regard my love as a virtue; I am proud of having distinguished his merit without those trappings of wealth, which alone can attract common eyes. His idea is for ever before me; I think with transport of those enchanting moments—

ments—Emily, that week of tender confidence is all my life, the rest is not worth numbering in my existence.

My father to-night gives a ball to Lord Melvin, with whom I am again, unwillingly, obliged to dance. I wish not to dance at all; to make this sacrifice to the most beloved of men: Why have I not courage to avow my sentiments, to declare he alone——This Lord Melvin too, I know not why, but I never see him without horror.

O Emily! How do all men sink on the comparison! He seems of a superior rank of beings. Your Julia will never give her hand to another; she swears this to the dear bosom of friendship.

This detested Lord Melvin is at the door; he will not let me proceed; he tells me it is to a lover I am writing; he says

this in a manner, and with a tone of voice—he looks at me with an earnestness—Lady Anne has alarmed me—Should my father intend—yet why should I fear the most cruel of all acts of tyranny from the most tender and indulgent of parents?

I feel a dejection of spirits on this subject, which does injury to my father's goodness: perhaps it is no more than the natural effects of absence on a tender and unexperienced heart.

Adieu! I am forced to finish my letter. All good angels guard and preserve my Emily!

Yours,

JULIA MANDEVILLE.

To

To the Earl of BELMONT.

WITH all my affection for Lord T-----, I am hourly shocked by that most unworthy of all faults, his haughtiness to inferior fortune, however distinguished by virtue, talents, or even the more shining advantage of birth. Dress, equipage, and the over-bearing assurance which wealth inspires, strike him so forcibly, that there is no room in his soul for that esteem which is a debt to modest merit.

We had yesterday to dine Mr. Herbert, one of the most amiable men I ever saw; his person was genteel, his countenance at once expressive of genius and worth, which were rendered more touching to me, by that pensive look and irresolute air, which are the constant attendants on an adverse fortune. Lord T----- returned his bow

almost without looking at him; and continued talking familiarly to a wretch with whom no gentleman would converse, were he not master of six thousand a year: the whole company, instructed in his situation by the supercilious air of the master of the house, treated him with the same neglect, which I endeavoured to console him for by every little civility in my power, and by confining my attention intirely to him; when we parted, he asked me to his house with a look full of sensibility; an invitation I shall take the first opportunity of accepting.

When the company were gone, I asked Lord T----- the character of this stranger. Why, really, says he, I believe he is in himself the most estimable man in my neighbourhood: of a good family too; but one must measure one's reception of people by the countenance the world shews them; and he is too poor to be greatly caressed

ressed there. Besides, I am not fond of being acquainted with unhappy people; they are very apt to ask favours.

Is it possible, said I, my Lord, interrupting him hastily, you can avow sentiments like these? Why are you raised by Providence above others? Why entrusted with that wealth and consequence which might make you a guardian angel to the unhappy? Where is my chaise? I will return to Belmont, where affliction ever finds a ready audience; where adversity is sure of being heard, though pomp and equipage wait.

Lord T----- smiled at my earnestness, and praised the generosity of my sentiments, which he assured me were his at my age: he owned, he had been to blame; but In the world, said he, Harry, we are carried away by the torrent, and act wrong every moment mechanically meerly by seeing others do the same. However, I

stand corrected, and you shall have no future reason to complain of me.

He spoke this with an air of good humour which reconciled us, and has promised to accompany me in my visit to Mr. Herbert, which I have insisted shall be the first we pay, and that he shall beg his pardon for the behaviour of yesterday.

Is it not strange, my Lord, that men whose hearts are not bad can avoid those whose characters do honor to their species, only because fortune denies them those outward distinctions which wealth can give to the lowest and most despicable of mankind?

Surely, of all human vices, Pride is the most detestable!

I am, &c.

H. MANDEVILLE.

To

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

CAN I play with the anxiety of a tender heart? Certainly, or I should not be what I am, a coquette of the first order. Setting aside the pleasure of the thing, and I know few pleasanter amusements, policy dictates this conduct; for there is no possibility of keeping any of you without throwing the charms of dear variety into one's treatment of you: nothing cloy's like continual sweets; a little acid is absolutely necessary.

I am just come from giving Lady Julia some excellent advice on the subject of her passion for you. Really, my dear, said I, you are extremely absurd to blush and look foolish about loving so pretty a fellow as Harry Mandeville, handsome, well made, lively, elegant; in the true classical stile,

and approved by the connoisseurs, by Madame le Comtesse de ——— herself, whom I look upon to be the greatest judge of male merit on the face of the globe.

It is not for loving him I am angry with you, but for entertaining so ridiculous a thought as that of marrying him. You have only one rational step to take; marry Lord Melvin, who has title and fortune, requisites not to be dispensed with in a husband, and take Harry Mandeville for your Cecisbeo. The dear creature was immensely displeased, as you, who know the romantic turn of her imagination, will easily conceive.

Oh, I had almost forgot: yes, indeed, you have great right to give yourself jealous airs: we have not heard of your coquetry with Miss Truman. My correspondent tells me, there is no doubt of its being a real passion on both sides, and
that

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that the Truman family have been making private enquiries into your fortune. I shewed Lady Julia the letter, and you cannot conceive how prettily she blushed.

But, to be grave, I am afraid you have nothing to fear from Lord Melvin. You must forgive my making use of this expression; for, as I see no possibility of surmounting the obstacles which oppose your union with Lady Julia, I am too much a friend to both, not to wish earnestly to break a connexion which has not a shadow of hope to support it.

But a truce to this subject, which is not a pleasant one to either of us.

I told you in my last I had something to say to you. As I am your confidante, you must consent to be mine, having a little present occasion for your services. You are to know, my dear Harry, that, with all

B 6

my

my coquetry, I am as much in love as yourself, and with almost as little prospect of success: this odious money is absolutely the bane of us true lovers, and always contrives to stand in our way.

My dear spouse then, who in the whole course of our acquaintance did but one obliging thing, being kindly determined I should neither be happy with him nor without him, obligingly, though nobody knows this but myself and the Caro Bellville, made my jointure what it is, on condition I never married again: on observance of which condition, it was to be in my power to give the estate to whoever I pleased at my death; but, on a proof of my supposed future marriage, it was to go immediately to a niece of his, who at his death was in a convent in France, who is ignorant of this condition, and whose whole present fortune scarce amounts to fifteen hundred pounds. She is both in person and mind one of the
most

most lovely of women, and has an affection for me, which inclines me to think she would come into measures for my sake, which I shall make it her interest to acquiesce in for her own.

Bellville's fortune is extremely moderate; and, if I marry him at present, I shall not add a shilling to it; his income will remain in statu-quo, with the incumbrance of an indigent woman of quality, whose affairs are a little derangé, and amongst whose virtues oeconomy was never one of the most observable. He would with transport marry me to-morrow, even on these hard conditions; but how little should I deserve so generous a passion, if I suffered it to seduce him to his ruin! I have wrote to my niece to come to England, when I shall tell her my passion for Bellville, and propose to her a private agreement to divide the fortune, which will be forfeited to her on my marriage, and which it is in my

power by living single to deprive her of for ever. Incapable, however, of injustice, I have at all events made a will, dividing it equally between her and Bellville, if I die unmarried: I have a right to do this for the man I love, as my father left thirty thousand pounds to Mr. Wilmot, which in equity ought to be regarded as mine, and which is all I desire, on the division: she, therefore by my will, has all she ever can expect, even from the strictest justice: and she can never, I think, hesitate between waiting till my death and at my mercy, and receiving at the present the utmost she could then hope for.

I have heard from the Lady to whom I enclosed my letter, which she has returned, my niece having left France a year ago, to accompany a relation into Italy. What I, therefore, have to ask of you is, to endeavour to find her out, by your Italian friends, as I will by mine at the same time; that I
may

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may write to her to return immediately to England, as I will not run the hazard of mentioning the subject in a letter. She is the daughter of the late colonel Hastings, once abroad in a public character, and is well known in Italy.

Bellville is not at all in the secret of my scheme; nor did I ever tell him I would marry him, though I sometimes give him reason to hope.

I am too good a politician in love matters ever to put a man out of doubt till half an hour before the ceremony. The moment a woman is weak enough to promise, she sets the heart of her lover at rest; the chase, and of consequence the pleasure, is at an end; and he has nothing to do but to seek a new object, and begin the pursuit over again.

I tell

I tell you, but I tell it in confidence, that if I find Bell Hastings, if she comes into my scheme, and my mind does not change, I may, perhaps, do Bellville the honor. And yet, when I reflect on the matter; on the condition of the obligation, "so long as ye both shall live"—Jesu Maria! Only think of promising to be of the same mind as long as one lives. My dear Harry, people may talk as they will, but the thing is utterly impossible.

Adieu!

Mon cher Ami,

A. WILMOT.

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

I Have already told you I came hither with a view of engaging Lord T——'s interest in support of those views, on which all my hopes of happiness depend. The friendship he has ever professed for me has been warm as that of a father. I was continually with him at Rome, and he there
prest

prest me to accept those services I then never expected to have occasion for. Till now content with my situation, love first raised in me the spirit of ambition, and determined me to accept those offers. In a former letter, I told you I was going to follow Lord T—— into the garden, to communicate to him my purpose of pushing my fortune in the world; on which I had before given general hints, which he seemed to approve, as a kind of spirit becoming a young man, warm with hope, and not destitute of merit.

On revolving my scheme as I approached him, it appeared so romantic, so void of all rational hope, that I had not resolution to mention it, and determined at least to suspend it till better digested, and more fitted to bear the cool eye of impartial reason: in these sentiments I should still have remained, had not a letter from Lady Anne Wilmot, by giving me jealousy, determined

terminated me not to defer one moment a design on which all my happiness depended.

I therefore, with some hesitation, this morning opened all my heart, and the real state of my circumstances, to Lord T——, concealing only what related to Lady Julia. He heard me with great coolness, carelessly lolling on a fettee; his eyes fixed on a new Chinese summer-house, opposite the window near which he sat, and made me the following answer; “Your views, Mr. Mandeville, seem rather romantic, for a man who has no party connexions, and so little parliamentary interest. However, you are of a good family, and there are things to be had in time if properly recommended. Have you no friend who would mention you to the minister?” He then rang the bell hastily for his valet, and retired to dress leaving me motionless with astonishment and indignation.

We

We met no more till dinner, when he treated me with a distant civility, the meaning of which was easily understood. He apologized, with an air of ceremony, on his being forced to go for a fortnight to Scarborough, with a party, who, being all strangers, he was afraid would not be agreeable to me; but, at his return, he should be glad of the honor of seeing me again. I bowed coldly, and took no other notice of what he said, than to order my chaise immediately; on which he pressed my stay to-night, but in vain. The servants leaving the room, he was a little disconcerted, but observed, He was sorry for me; my case was really hard; he always thought my fortune much larger; wondered at my father's indiscretion in educating me so improperly — People ought to consider their circumstances — It was pity I had no friend — Lord Belmont, if he pleased, but he was so absurdly fond of his independence.

During

During his harangue, I entirely recovered my presence of mind; and, with an air of great ease and unconcern, told his Lordship, I was much obliged to him for curing me of a pursuit so improper for a man of my temper: that the liberal offers of service he had formerly made me at Rome had betrayed me into a false opinion of the friendship of great men; but that I was now convinced of what value such professions are, and that they are only made where it seems certain they will never be accepted. That it was impossible his Lordship could judge properly of the conduct of a man of my father's character; that I was proud of being son to the most exalted and generous of mankind; and would not give up that honor to be first minister to the first prince on earth. That I never so strongly felt the value of independence as at that moment, and did not wonder at the value Lord Belmont set on so inestimable a blessing.

I came

I came away without waiting for an answer, and stopped at an inn about ten miles off, where I am now waiting for one of my servants, whom I left behind to bring me a letter I expect to-day from Lady Anne Wilmot.

And now, my dear Mordaunt, what will become of your unhappy friend? The flattering hopes I fondly entertained are dispersing like a flitting cloud. Lord T——'s behaviour has removed the veil which love had spread over the wildness of my design, and convinced me that success is impossible. Where or to whom shall I now apply? Lord T—— was him on whose friendship I most depended; whose power to serve me was greatest, and whose professions gave me most right to expect his services.

I here for ever give up all views — Can I then calmly give up the hopes of Lady Julia?

Julia? I will go back, confess my passion to Lord Belmont, and throw myself on that goodness whose first delight is that of making others happy. Yet can I hope he will give his daughter, the heiress of such affluence—Disinterested and noble as he is, the false maxims of the world—Mordaunt, I am born to wretchedness—What have I gained by inspiring the most angelic of women with pity? I have doomed to misery her for whose happiness I would sacrifice my life.

The servant I left at Lord T——'s is this moment arrived; he has brought me a letter—I know not why, but my hand trembles, I have scarce power to break the seal.

To

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

SUMMON all your resolution, my dear Mr. Mandeville — Sure my fears were prophetic — do not be too much alarmed — Lady Julia is well; she is in tears by me; she disapproves her father's views; she begs me to assure you her heart is not less sensible than yours will be to so cruel a stroke; begs you not to return yet to Belmont, but to depend on her affection, and leave your fate in her hands.

The inclosed letters will acquaint you with what I have been for some time in apprehension of. With such a design for his daughter, why did my Lord bring you to Belmont? So formed to inspire love as you both are, why did he expose you to danger it was scarce possible for you to escape?

But

But it is now too late to wish you had never met; all my hopes are in your resolution; I dare expect nothing from Lady Julia's.

To the Earl of BELMONT.

SEPTEMBER 10.

My LORD,

YOUR Lordship's absence, and the death of my mother, which renders my estate more worthy Lady Julia, has hitherto prevented my explanation of an unguarded expression, which I find has had the misfortune to displease you. I am far from intending — Your Lordship intirely mistakes me — No man can be more sensible of the honor of your Lordship's alliance, or of Lady Julia's uncommon perfections: but a light way of talking, which one naturally acquires in the world, has led me unde-

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undesignedly into some appearance of disrespect to a state, of the felicity of which I have not the least doubt.

I flatter myself your Lordship will, on cooler reflexion, forgive an unguarded word, and allow me to hope for the honor of convincing you and the Lady, by my future conduct, that no man has a higher idea of matrimonial happiness, than,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most devoted

and very obedient Servant,

FONDVILLE.

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C

To

To Lord Viscount FONDVILLE.

My Lord,

I Readily admit your Lordship's apology; as I am under no apprehension any man can intend to slight the alliance of one who has always endeavoured his character should be worthy his birth, and the rank he has the honor to hold in his country.

As I love the plainest dealing in affairs of such consequence, I will not a moment deceive your Lordship, or suffer you to engage in a pursuit, which, if I have any influence over my daughter, will be unsuccessful; not from any disesteem of your Lordship, but because I have another view for her, the disappointment of which would destroy all my hopes of a happy evening of life, and embitter my last hours. I have long intended her, with her own approbation, which her filial piety gives me no
room

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room to doubt, for the son of my friend, the heir of an earldom, and of an affluent fortune; and, what I much more value, of uncommon merit; and one of the first families in the kingdom.

I am sure your Lordship will not endeavour to oppose a design, which has been long formed, is far advanced, and on which I have so much set my heart.

I am, my Lord,

with great Regard,

Your Lordship's very obedient

and devoted Servant,

BELMONT.

I have long, my dear Mr. Mandeville, suspected my Lord's design in favour of Lord Melvin, of which there is not now the least doubt. Our coming away from his father's, on his arrival, was a circum-

stance which then struck me extremely. Lady Julia's stay there, on this supposition, would have been ill suited to the delicacy of her sex and rank. Yet I am astonished my Lord has not sooner told her of it; but there is no accounting for the caprice of age. How shall I tell my dear Mr. Mandeville my sentiments on this discovery! How shall I, without wounding a passion which bears no restraint, hint to him my wishes, that he would sacrifice that love, which can only by its continuance make him wretched, to Lady Julia's peace of mind! That he would himself assist her to conquer an inclination which is incompatible with the views which the most indulgent of parents entertains for her happiness! Views, the disappointment of which, he has declared, will embitter his last hours? Make one generous effort, my amiable friend: it is glorious to conquer where conquest is most difficult: think of Lord Belmont's friendship; of his almost

most parental care of your fortune; of the pleasure with which he talks of your virtues; and it will be impossible for you to continue to oppose that design on which his hopes of a happy evening of life are founded. Would you deny a happy evening to that life to which thousands owe the felicity of theirs?

It is from you, and not Lady Julia, I expect this sacrifice: the consideration which will most strongly influence you to make it, will for ever prevent her; it pains me to wound your delicacy, by saying I mean the difference of your fortunes. From a romantic generosity, she will think herself obliged to that perseverance, which the same generosity now calls loudly on you to decline. If you have the greatness of mind to give up hopes which can never be accomplished, time and absence may assist Lady Julia's filial sweetness, and bring her to a compliance with her father's will. Believe,

C 3

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that, whilst I write, my heart melts with compassion for you both; and that nothing but the tenderest friendship could have urged me to so painful a task.

I am, &c.

A. WILMOT.

O Mordaunt! till now I was never truly wretched. I have not even a glimpse of hope remaining. I must give up the only wish for which life is worth my care, or embitter the last hours of the man, who with unequalled generosity has pleaded my cause against himself, and declined a noble acquisition of fortune, that it might give consequence, and, as he thought, happiness to me.

But Lady Julia!——Heaven is my witness, to make her happy, I would this moment give up all my right in her heart. I would myself lead her to the altar, though the same hand the next moment——Mordaunt, I will promise, if she requests
it,

it, to consent to her marriage; but I will not to survive it. My thoughts are all distraction—I cannot write to Lady Anne—I will write to the most lovely of women—She knows not the cruel request of her friend—Her love disdains the low consideration of wealth——Our hearts were formed for each other—She knows every sentiment of my soul—She knows, that, were I monarch of the world—O Mordaunt, is it possible—Can the gentle, the indulgent Lord Belmont—but all conspires to undo me: the best, the most mild of mankind is turned a tyrant to make me wretched. I will know from herself if she consents; I will give up my own hopes to her happiness; but let me first be convinced it is indeed her happiness, not the prejudices of her father, to which I make so cruel a sacrifice.

I have wrote to Lady Julia, and am more calm: I have mentioned Lady Anne's request.

quest. I have told her, that, though without hope, if I am still blest in her affection, I will never resign her but with life: but if she can be happy with Lord Melvin, if she asks it, she is this moment free. I have entreated her to consult her own heart, without a thought of me; that I would die this moment to contribute to her peace; that the first purpose of my life is her happiness, with which my own shall never come in competition; that there is nothing I will ever refuse her, but to cease to think of her with adoration; that if she wishes to marry Lord Melvin (Great Heaven! is it possible she can wish it?) I will return to Italy, and carry far from her a passion which can never cease but in the grave.

I will wait here an answer, and then determine where to go.

To

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

THURSDAY.

EMILY HOWARD came last night. Lady Julia and she are reading natural history with my Lord, and examining butterfly wings in a microscope; a pretty innocent amusement to keep young ladies out of mischief. I wish my Lord had thought of it sooner, it might have been of great use to Lady Julia: if one is but amused, it is of no great consequence whether by a butterfly or a lover.

Vastly severe that last sentence; it must be allowed I have a pretty genius for satire.

My Lord certainly intends Lady Julia for Lord Melvin. I have wrote Harry a ridiculous wise letter, persuading him to sacrifice

use his own passion to my Lord's caprice; and giving him advice, which I should hate him, if I thought him capable of following. How easy it is to be wise for any body but ones self! I suppose Harry could with great calmness preach on the imprudence of my attachment to you.

We are going to a strolling play to-night. My Lord encourages diversions on his estate, on the same principle that a wise Prince protects the fine arts, to keep his people at home.

We had a family to dine here yesterday, who are very agreeable people, and to whom my Lord shewed a particular attention. Mr. Barker, the father, is the most bearable man I have seen in this country; and the daughters vastly above the stile of the misses here: Lady Belmont intends to take them this winter with her to town,

as she does, every year, some gentleman's daughter in her neighbourhood.

Adieu! I am peevish beyond measure, and scarce know what I would be at. Have you never these kinds of feels? Never fretful, you cannot tell why? It is well for you, you are not here: a lover and a favourite lap-dog have a dreadful life on these occasions; or indeed any animal one can use ill with impunity. Strangely severe to-day; do not you perceive it?

Six o'Clock.

Ten thousand times more peevish than ever: we have just had a visit from "the best kind of woman in the world," and her daughter, "an amiable and accomplished young lady," who writes verses and journals, paints, makes shell-flowers, cuts paper, and has "every qualification to render the marriage state happy;"

C 6.

talks

talks of the charms of rural retirement, the pleasures of reflexion, the beauties of the mind ; and sings, " Love's a gentle generous passion." It was not in nature to have stood it a quarter of an hour. Heaven be praised ! the play hour is come, and the coaches are at the door.

Eleven o' Clock.

We have seen them enact Juliet and Romeo. Lady Julia seemed to sympathize with the heroine :

" I'll not wed Paris ; Romeo is my husband."
" band."

Buona Notte.

To

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

WE have been all extremely busy to-day, celebrating a harvest home; a long procession of our village youths, all drest gaily in fine shirts, adorned with ribbands, paired with the handsomest of the country girls, in white jackets and petticoats, garlands of flowers and wheat-ears on their heads, their rakes streaming with various coloured ribbands, which glittered in the sun-beams, preceded the harvest cart; on which, in a bower of green boughs, stood a beautiful little girl, drest in the rural stile, with inimitable elegance, by the hands of Lady Julia herself. The gay procession walked slowly through the village; a tabor and pipe playing before them, till they came before the house, where they danced a thousand little rustic dances, the novelty of which charmed me extremely:
they

they then adjourned to the hall, where a plentiful feast was provided, and where the whole village were that night my Lord's guests.

Lord Belmont is extremely fond of all these old customs, and will suffer none of them to be left off on his estate. The prospect of this festivity, he says, cheers them in their labor, and is a laudable tribute of gladness to that beneficent Being, to whose bounty we owe the full reward of our toil, the plenteous harvest, and who rejoices in the happiness of his creatures.

Besides, says my Lord, all these amusements encourage a spirit of matrimony, and encrease the number of my people.

And pray, my dear Lord, do they encourage no other spirit?

No,

No, Madam; Lady Belmont's anger and mine would, in such a case, they know, contrary to that of the world, fall chiefly where it ought, on the seducer, who would be for ever expelled my estate, the heaviest punishment I could possibly inflict. Then, as I am a declared enemy to interested marriages, the young people are allowed to chuse for themselves, which removes the temptation to vice, which is generally caused by the shameful avarice of parents.

Our example too is of great service, and allures them to a regular behaviour; they think that must be the happiest life, which we, who have the power of chusing, prefer; and therefore it is the fashion amongst them to be regular, and seek their happiness, as we do, at home.

I believe my Lord is right: I am well pleased too, he throws the blame on you he wretches, and excuses the poor lasses.

In

In the eye of the world it is to be sure "toute
"au contraire;" but my Lord and Lady
Belmont are so singular as to see with their
own eyes.

Adieu! We are all to go down one
dance with the villagers; and I hear the
tabor and pipe.

Oh! Heavens! a coach and six, the Man-
deville livery! a running footman; it must
be Lady Mary; I will enquire. It is her-
self; my Lord flies to receive her in the
court; Lady Belmont and Lady Julia are
at the door; she alights; I never saw her
before; her figure is striking, full of digni-
ty, and that grace which is almost lost in
this generation; she enters the house, lean-
ing on my Lord. I am grieved Harry is
gone; I wished her to be some time with
him; she only just saw him as he came
through London in his way to Belmont.

But

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But I must go to pay my respects.
Adieu!

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

TUESDAY, September 14.

AS I was sitting alone this morning at the inn looking out at a window, I saw ride into the yard Mr. Herbert, the gentleman to whom I took so strong an inclination at Lord T——'s, and for whose character I have the highest esteem. He saw me, and, springing eagerly from his horse, sent to know if I would admit him. He came, and, after expressing some surprize at seeing me there, on my telling him I had left Lord T——'s, and waited there a few days for letters, he insisted on my spending that time at his house, in a manner which it was impossible for me to refuse. As we rode, he apologized for the entertain-
ment

ment I should meet with; wished for a larger share of the gifts of fortune, that he might receive his friends in a manner more suited to his desires; but said, if he knew me, the heart of the host was all I should care for; and that I should relish the homely meat of chearful friendship, as well as the splendid profusion of luxury and pride.

We arrived at a neat house, with a little romantic garden behind it, where we were received by Mrs. Herbert with that hospitable air which is inseparable from real benevolence of heart. Her person was extremely pleasing, and her dress elegantly plain. She had a little boy sitting by her, lovely and playful as a Cupid.

Neatness and propriety presided at our frugal meat; and, after a little desert of excellent fruit from their garden, Mr. Herbert took me the tour of his estate, which consists of about seventy acres, which he
cultivates

cultivates himself, and has embellished with every thing that can make it lovely: all has the appearance of content and peace: I observed this to him, and added, that I infinitely envied his happiness. He stopped, and looked earnestly at me; I am indeed, said he, happy in many things; and, though my fortune is greatly below my birth and hopes, I am not in want: things may be better; till then, I bear them as I can: my wife, whose worth outweighs all praise, combats our ill fate with a spirit I cannot always imitate; for her, Mr. Mandeville, for her, I feel with double keenness the stings of adversity.

I observed him too much affected to pursue the subject farther; I therefore changed it, and returned to the house: but I will not leave him till I am instructed how to draw the worm of discontent from one of the worthiest of human bosoms.

Write

Write to me here. I shall stay till I know when my father will be in the country. Adieu!

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

WEDNESDAY.

I AM charmed with Lady Mary; her address is easy, polite, attentive; she is tall, brown, well made, and perfectly graceful; her air would inspire awe, if not softened by the utmost sweetness and affability of behaviour. She has great vivacity in her looks and manner; her hair is quite white: her eyes have lost their lustre, yet it is easy to see she has been very handsome; her hand and arm are yet lovely, of which she is not a little vain: take her for all in all, she is the finest ruin I ever beheld.

She is full of anecdotes of the Queen's time, chosen with judgment, and told with spirit,

spirit, which make her conversation infinitely amusing. She has been saying so many fine things of Harry, who by the way strongly resembles her, that I begin to think the good old Lady has a matrimonial design upon him: really not amiss such a scheme; fine remains, an affluent fortune, and as to years, eighty is absolutely the best age I know for a wife, except eighteen. She thinks him, what is extremely in his favor, very like her brother, who was killed at the battle of Almanza.

She has the talkativeness of age, which, where there is sense and knowledge of the world, I do not dislike; she is learned in genealogy, and can tell you not only the intermarriages, but the family virtues and vices, of every ancient house in the kingdom; as to the modern ones, she does not think them worth studying. I am high in her favor, because my blood has never been contaminated by a city marriage. She tells

tells me, the women of my family have always been famous for a certain ease and bon air, which she is glad to see is not lost; and that my grand-mother was the greatest ornament of Queen Mary's court.

She has a great contempt for the present race of beauties, says the very idea of grace is almost lost, and that we see nothing now but meer pretty women; that she can only account for this, by supposing the trifling turn of their minds gives an insignificance to their persons; and that she would advise them to learn to think and act, in order to their being able to look and move, with dignity. "You, nephew, she says, "who remember each bright Churchill of "the Galaxy, will readily come into my "opinion." She does me the honor, however, to say I am the most graceful woman she has seen since the Queen's time.

She

She is a great politician, and something inclined to be a tory, though she professes perfect impartiality; loves the King, and idolizes the Queen, because she thinks she sees in her the sweet affability so admired in her favorite Queen Mary —— Forgives the cits for their opposition to peace, because they get more money by war, the criterion by which they judge every thing: but is amazed nobles, born guardians of the just rights of the throne, the fountain of all their honors, should join these interested Change-alley politicians, and endeavour, from private pique, to weaken the hands of their sovereign: But adds, with a sigh, that mankind were always alike, and that it was just so in the Queen's time.

“ But pray, nephew, this Canada;—I
 “ remember when Hill was sent against it
 “ in the Queen's time, it was thought of
 “ great consequence; and two or three years
 “ ago pamphlets were wrote, I am told, by
 I “ men

“ men very well born, to prove it was the only
“ point we ought to have in view; but a point
“ in which we could scarce hope to succeed.
“ Is it really so trifling an acquisition? And
“ how comes the nature of it to be so changed
“ now we are likely to keep it?”

“ The terms of peace talked of, madam,
“ said Lord Belmont, if we consider them
“ in the only just light, their relation to
“ the end for which war was undertaken,
“ are such as wisdom and equity equally
“ dictate. Canada, considered merely as
“ the possession of it gives security to our
“ colonies, is of more national consequence
“ to us than all our Sugar-islands on the
“ globe: but, if the present inhabitants are
“ encouraged to stay, by the mildness of
“ our laws, and that full liberty of consci-
“ ence to which every rational creature has
“ a right; if they are taught, by every ho-
“ nest art, a love for that constitution which
“ makes them free, and a personal attach-
“ ment

"ment to the best of princes; if they are
"allured to our religious worship, by see-
"ing it in its genuine beauty, equally re-
"mote from their load of trifling ceremo-
"nies and the unornamented forms of the
"dissenters: if population is encouraged;
"the waste lands settled; and a whale
"fishery set on foot, we shall find it, confi-
"dered in every light, an acquisition be-
"yond our most sanguine hopes."

O Ciel! I am tired. Adieu!

A. WILMOT.

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

I AM still with Mr. Herbert, whose ge-
nius, learning, and goodness of heart,
make him an honor to human nature it-
self: I shall never know peace till I find a
way to render his situation more worthy of
his character.

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It

It was with great difficulty I drew from him the following short account of himself.

“ There is nothing in my past life but what is, I fear, too usual to be worth relating. Warmth of temper, and the vanity of youth, seduced me into a circle of company not to be kept up, by one of my fortune, at a less price than ruin; and the same vanity, with inexperience and a false opinion of mankind, betrayed me into views not less destructive.

My father unhappily died when I was about nineteen, leaving me at college, master of my own actions, of the little estate you see, and of four thousand pounds; a sum I then thought inexhaustible. The reputation of such a sum in my own power drew about me all the worthless young men of fashion in the university, whose persuasions and examples led me into a train of expence
to

to which my fortune was far from being equal ; they flattered those talents of which I thought but too well myself, and easily persuaded me I only wanted to be known in the great world to rise to what height I pleased. I accompanied them to town, full of the idea of raising my fortune, to which they assured me nothing so much contributed as the appearance of being perfectly at ease. To this end I launched into every expence they proposed; dress, equipage, play, and every fashionable extravagance. I was well received every where, and thought my designs in a prosperous way. I found my fortune however decaying at the end of two years, but had not courage to enquire into particulars; till, drawing upon my banker for money to pay some debts I had unwarily contracted, he told me he had already paid the whole.

It was some time before he could convince me of this; but, finding his accounts

had all the appearance of exactness, I was obliged to acquiesce, and went home in an agony of despair. Unable to quit a way of life which was become habitual, and which it was now impossible to support without dishonesty, there is no describing my feelings. After revolving a thousand different schemes in my imagination, I determined to conceal the situation of my affairs, to sell my estate, and, before that money was gone, press my great friends to serve me.

I applied to my banker, who undertook to send me a purchaser ; but, before I had compleated my design, I received by the post a bank note of five hundred pounds, the sum I was indebted in town ; with a letter, in a hand unknown to me, representing, in the most delicate manner, the imprudence of my past conduct, the madness of my views, and the certain consequences of my parting with this my last stake : intreating me, by the memory of my parents, to preserve

serve this sacred deposit, this little remain of what their tender care had left me.

Melted with this generosity, struck with the just reproof, yet chained down to that world which had undone me; convinced, yet irresolute; I struggled with my own heart to determine on retiring into the country; but, to postpone as long as possible a retreat, which I could not bear to think of, resolved first to try my great friends, and be certain of what I had to hope for. I represented to them the necessity of immediately attempting in earnest to push my fortune; and, pressing them closely, found their promises were air. They talked in general terms of their esteem for me, of my merit; and each of them expressed the warmest desire of seeing me served by any means but his own. In order to animate their languid friendship, I discovered to them the real state of my affairs; and from that moment found myself avoided by them all;

they dropped me by degrees: were never at home when I called; and at length ceased even to bow to me in public. Ashamed of their own baseness in thus cruelly deserting me, after leading me into ruin, most of them sought to excuse it by blackening my character; whilst the best of them affected coldly to pity me, as a vain foolish fellow, who had undone himself by forgetting his own primeval situation, and arrogantly presuming to live with them.

Burning with indignation, I determined at once to break the bands which held me captive. I sold my equipage, discharged my debts, and came down to this place, resolved to find out to whom I had been so obliged; and, by living on half my income, to repay this generous benefactor.

I took lodgings in a farm-house, and soon found that peace of mind to which I
had

had long been a stranger. I tried every method to find out to whom I was indebted for an act of such exalted friendship, but in vain; till one day, a relation being present, of whom I had some suspicion, I related the story, as of another, keeping my eyes fixed upon him; he remained perfectly unmoved; but, happening to turn my head, I saw a confusion in the air of a young lady in the room, with whom I had been bred in the greatest intimacy, which excited all my attention. She saw me observe her, and a blush overspread her cheek, which convinced me I had found the object of my search. I changed the subject; and the next morning made her a visit, when I with great difficulty drew from her a confession, that, having long had a tender esteem for me, she had, by a friend in town, watched all my actions: that my banker had applied to that very friend to purchase my estate; on which, seeing me on the brink of absolute ruin, she

had taken what appeared to her the most probable means to prevent it; and was so happy as to see she had succeeded.

I dare say, I need not tell you this noble creature was my dear Mrs. Herbert; the smallness of whose fortune added infinitely to the generosity of the action, what she had sent me being within a trifle her all.

I loved, I addressed her, and, at length, was so happy as to call her mine. Blest in the most exalted passion for each other, a passion which time has rather encreased than abated, the narrowness of our circumstances is the only ill we have to complain of; even this we have borne with cheerfulness, in the hope of happier days. A late accident has, however, broke in upon that tranquillity with which Heaven has hitherto blest us. It is now about six months since a Lady, who tenderly esteemed us both, sent for me, and acquainted me she had
procured

procured for me of a gentleman, whose family had been obliged to, her, a living of above three hundred pounds a year, in a beautiful situation; and desired I would immediately take orders. As I was originally educated with a view to the church, I consented with inexpressible joy, blessing that Heaven, which had thus rewarded my Sophia's generous affection, and given us all that was wanting to compleat our happiness. I set out for London with an exulting heart; where, after being ordained, I received the presentation, and went down to take possession. The house was large and elegant, and betrayed me into furnishing it rather better than suited my present circumstances; but, as I determined on the utmost frugality for some years, I thought this of little consequence. I set men to work in the garden; and wrote my wife an account of our new residence, which made her eager to hasten her removal. The day of my coming for my family was fixed,

when my patron came down to his seat, which was within sight of the rectory; I waited on him, and found him furrounded by wretches to whom it was scarce possible to give the name of human; profligate, abandoned, lost even to the sense of shame; their conversation wounded reason, virtue, politeness, and all that mankind agreed to hold sacred. My patron, the wealthy heir of a West Indian, was raised above them, only by fortune and a superior degree of ignorance and savage insensibility. He received me with an insolence, which I found great difficulty in submitting to: and, after some brutal general reflexions on the clergy, dared to utter expressions relating to the beauty of my wife, which fired my soul with indignation: breathless with rage, I had not power to reply: when, one of the company speaking low to him, he answered aloud, Hark you, Herbert, this blockhead thinks a parson a gentleman; and wonders

at my treating, as I please, a fellow who eats my bread.

I will sooner want bread, Sir, said I, rising, than owe it to the most contemptible of mankind. Your living is once more at your disposal; I resign all right to it before this company.

The pleasure of having acted as I ought swelled my bosom with conscious delight, and supported me till I reached home; when my heart sunk at the thought of what my Sophia might feel from the disappointment. Our affairs too were a little embarrassed, from which misery I had hoped to be set free, instead of which my debts were increased. Mr. Mandeville, if you never knew the horrors of being in debt, you can form no idea of what it is to breathe the air at the mercy of another; to labor, to struggle to be just, whilst the cruel world are loading you with the guilt of injustice.

I entered the house, filled with horrors not to be conceived. My wife met me with eager enquiries about our future residence; and with repeated thanks to that God who had thus graciously bestowed on us the means of doing justice to all the world. You will imagine what I felt at that moment: instead of replying, I related to her the treatment I had met with, and the character of him to whom we were to be obliged; and asked her, what she would wish me to do? Resign the living, said she, and trust to that Heaven whose goodness is over all his creatures. I embraced her with tears of tender transport, and told her I had already done it. We wrote to the Lady to whose friendship we had been obliged for the presentation; and she had the greatness of mind not to disapprove my conduct. We have since practised a more severe frugality, which we are determined not to relax till what we owe is fully discharged: time will, we hope, bring about this end, and remove
the

the load which now oppresses my heart. Determined to trust to Heaven and our own industry, and to aim at independence alone, I have avoided all acquaintance which could interfere with this only rational plan: but Lord T——, seeing me at the house of a nobleman whose virtues do honour to his rank, and imagining my fortune easy from my cordial reception there, invited me earnestly to his seat; where, having, as I suppose, been since undeceived as to my situation, you were a witness of his unworthy treatment of me; of one descended from a family noble as his own, liberally educated, with a spirit equally above meanness and pride, and a heart which feels too sensibly to be happy in a world like this.

Oh! Mr. Mandeville! What can you think of him, who, instead of pouring out his soul in thankfulness to Heaven for those advantages he enjoys by his goodness above his fellow-creatures, makes use of them to
wound

wound the bosom of the wretched, and add double bitterness to the cup of adversity?

The real evils of a narrow fortune are trifling; its worst pangs spring from the unfeeling cruelty of others; it is not always that philosophy can raise us above the proud man's contumely, or those thousand insults

“ Which patient merit of th' unworthy
“ takes.”

You, Mr. Mandeville, are young, and full of probity; your own heart will mislead you, by drawing too flattering a picture of others; the world is gay before you; and, blinded by prosperity, you have never yet seen it as it is. I have heard you with infinite concern hint designs too like my own; let me intreat, let me conjure you, to profit by my example; if peace is worth your care, be content with your paternal fortune, however small; nor, by
rashly

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rashly launching on the flattering sea of hope, hazard that shipwreck which I have suffered."

Mordaunt! Is not this the voice of Heaven? I will return to the bosom of independence, and give up designs in which it is almost impossible for modest worth to succeed.

My father is in town; I will go to him when he returns; his advice shall determine my future conduct.

A letter from Lady Julia: my servant has this moment brought it from Lord T——'s, whither I desired it to be directed; not chusing to let them know I have put an end to my visit, lest Lord Belmont should insist on my return.

To

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

IN what words shall I assure the most amiable of men he has nothing to fear from Lord Melvin? If he knows my heart, he knows it incapable of change; he knows, not his own generous spirit more disdains the low consideration of fortune; he knows, I can have but one wish, that this accidental advantage was on his side, that he might taste the transport of obliging her he loves.

My duty, my gratitude to the best of parents, forbids my entering into present engagements without his knowledge; nor will I make future ones, which would have in view an event on which I cannot think without horror: but his commands, were he capable of acting so inconsistently with his past indulgent goodness, would be insufficient to make me give my hand to Lord Melvin, when my heart is fixedly another's.

I may,

I may, perhaps, assume courage to own my sensibility, a sensibility justified by such merit in the object, to the tenderest of mothers and friends: in the mean time, defer your return to Belmont, and hope every thing from time, my father's friendship, and my unalterable esteem—Esteem did I say? Where did I learn this coldness of expression? Let me own, though I am covered with blushes whilst I write, it is from my love, my ardent love, from a passion which is the pride and boast of my life, that the most charming of mankind has every thing to hope: if his happiness depends on my affection, he is happy.

You shall hear from me by Lady Anne and my beloved Emily; at present, you will not ask to hear from me.

Adieu!

Oh! Mordaunt! How shall I restrain the wild transports of my heart! “Her love, her
“most

“most ardent love”—How could I suspect her truth?—No, my friend, I ask no more ;
• I will not return to Belmont; certain of her tenderness, I submit, without repining, to her commands.

Unable, however, to resist the desire of being near her, I will go privately to a little farm, four miles from Belmont, of which it has a view; which is rented by an old servant of my father’s, whose son is in love with one of Lady Belmont’s maids, and from whom I shall hear daily accounts of Lady Julia; as it is near the road, I may even have a chance of seeing her pass by.

I shall leave my servants at the inn, and order all my letters hither: Mr. Herbert will convey them to me, and keep the secret of my retreat.

Great Heaven! I shall to-night be near her, I shall behold the turrets of Belmont!

It

It is even possible I may see the dear object of all my wishes. A thousand sweet ideas rise in my mind. My heart dances with pleasure.

Mordaunt! she loves me, she will never be another's.

This passion absorbs me wholly: I had almost forgot my friend; go to my banker's; take a hundred pounds, and send it by the post to Mr. Herbert, without letting him know from whence it comes. Why is this trifle all that is in my power to do for worth like his? If a happier fate—But let me not encourage the sanguine hopes of youth.

I will introduce him to Lord Belmont, the friend of virtue, the support of the unhappy, the delegate of Heaven itself.

Adieu! your faithful

H. MANDEVILLE.

To

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

THURSDAY.

A PRETTY sentimental letter your last; and would make an admirable figure in a true history of Celadon and Urania. Absolutely though, Bellville, for people who have sensibility, and so little prospect of coming together in an honorable way, we are a most extraordinary pair of lovers. And yet the world — à propos to the world, a French author I am reading says, A wise writer, to divert the fury of criticism from his works, should throw it now and then an indiscretion in his conduct to play with, as seamen do a tub to the whale.

Do not you think this might be a useful hint to us beauties? If I treat the good old ladies sometimes with a little imprudence

dence in regard to you, my complexion may escape the better for it.

We are just returned from a party on the water, which, like most concerted parties, turned out exceedingly dull: we had gilded barges, excellent musick, an elegant repast, and all that could invite Pleasure amongst us; but whether her Ladyship be a true coquette, flying fastest when pursued, or what is the reason I know not, but certain it is, one seldom finds her when one goes to seek her; her visits are generally spontaneous and unexpected; she rejects all invitations, and comes upon you in her own way, by surprize. I set off in high spirits, my heart beating with expectation, and never past a more languid day; I fancied every moment would be pleasanter, but found the last hour as spiritless as the first. I saw chagrin and disappointment in the eyes of half the company, especially the younger part of it. Lady Julia seemed to say,

say, "All this would be charming, if Harry Mandeville was here." My own ideas were something similar, I could not keep my imagination from wandering a little to Grosvenor-street; most of the misses were in the same situation, whilst the good old people seemed perfectly satisfied; which convinces me that, at a certain time of life, there is no pleasure without the heart; where that is untouched, and takes no part in your amusements, all is still life and vegetation: it is in vain to expect enjoyment from outward objects, where the soul is from home.

I missed my sweet Harry exceedingly; for, though not a lover, he is a divine fellow; and there is something vastly amusing in having so agreeable an object before one's eyes.

Whenever

Whenever I make a party of pleasure, it shall consist all of lovers, who have not met for a twelvemonth.

Who should we meet on our return, but Fondville, in a superb barge, full of company, dying at the feet of the Cittadina, who was singing a melting Italian air. Yes, we are to be Lady Viscountess Fondville, all is agreed, the cloaths bespoke, our very garters interwoven with coronets. I shall get off before the days of visitation, for there will be no supporting Madame la Viscomtesse.

I have been talking half an hour *tete à tete* with Lady Mary; and have let her into the secret of little Westbrook's passion for Harry: She drew up at the very mention; was astonished, that a creature of yesterday could think of mixing his blood with that of Mandeville; and declared she knew but twenty houses in Europe into which she should ever consent to Harry's marrying.

I took

I took this opportunity of giving a hint of his inclination for Lady Julia, but am doubtful whether she understood me. Oh! that he had Lord Melvin's expectations! But why do I wish for impossibilities? Let me rather wish, what is next to impossible, that Lord Belmont would overlook the want of them!

Adieu!

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

THURSDAY Evening.

O CIEL! Une aventure! Making use of the sweet liberty of Belmont, which has no rule but that of the Thelemes, "Do what thou wilt," I left them after dinner to settle family affairs, and ordered my chariot to take a solitary airing: an old cat, however, arriving just as it came

came to the door, who is a famous proficient in scandal, a treat I am absolutely deprived of at Belmont; I changed my mind, and asked her to accompany me, that I might be amused with the secret history of all the neighbourhood.

She had torn to pieces half a dozen of the prettiest women about us, when, passing through a little village about six miles from Belmont, I was struck with the extreme neatness of a small house and garden near the road; there was an elegant plainness in the air of it, which pleased me so much that I pulled the string, and ordered the coachman to stop, that I might examine it more at leisure. I was going to bid him drive on, when two women came out of an arbor, one of whom instantly engaged all my attention.

Imagine to yourself in such a place all that is graceful and lovely in woman; an

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elegance

elegance of form and habit; a dignity of deportment; an air of delicate languor and sensibility, which won the heart at a look; a complexion inclining to pale; the finest dark eyes; with a countenance in which a modest sorrow and dignified dejection gave the strongest indications of suffering merit.

My companion, seeing the apparent partiality with which I beheld this amiable object, began to give me the history of her, embittered by all the virulence of malice; which, however, amounted to no more, than that she was a stranger, and that, as nobody knew who she was, they generously concluded she was one whose interest it was not to be known.

They now drew nearer to us; and the charming creature, raising her eyes, and then first seeing us, exclaimed, Good Heaven! Lady Anne Wilmot! Is it possible!

I now

I now regarded her more attentively; and, though greatly changed since I saw her, knew her to be Bell Hastings, Mr. Wilmot's niece, whom I had been long endeavouring to find. I sprung from the chariot to meet her, and need not tell you my transport at so unexpected a rencounter.

After the common enquiries on meeting, I expressed my surprize at finding her there, with a gentle reproach at her unkindness in being in England without letting me know it. She blushed, and seemed embarrassed at what I said; on which I changed the subject, and pressed her to accompany me immediately to Belmont, the place on earth where merit like hers was most sure of finding its best reward, esteem. She declined this proposal in a manner which convinced me she had some particular reason for refusing, which I doubted not her taking a proper time to explain, and therefore gave it up for the present.

I insisted, however, on her promising to go with me to town; and that nothing but a matrimonial engagement should separate her from me. There is no describing the excess of her gratitude; tears of tender sensibility shone in her eyes; and I could see her bosom swell with sensations to which she could not give utterance.

An hour passed without my having thought of my meagre companion at the gate. I was not sorry for having accidentally mortified the envious wretch for her spite to poor Bell. However, as I would not designedly be shocking, I sent to her, and apologized for my neglect, which I excused from my joy at meeting unexpectedly with a relation for whom I had the tenderest friendship. The creature alighted at my request; and, to make amends for the picture she had drawn of my amiable niece, overwhelmed her with civilities and expressions of esteem, which would have
encreased

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 77

encreased my contempt for her, if any thing in nature could.

After tea we returned, when I related my adventure, and, though so late, could scarce prevail on Lady Belmont to defer her visit to Bell till to-morrow. She hopes to be able to prevail on her to accompany us back to Belmont.

Adio, caro.

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

I Write this from my new abode, a little sequestered farm, at the side of a romantic wood: there is an arbor in the thickest grove of intermingled jessamines and roses. Here William meditates future happy hours, when joined to his lovely Anna: he has adorned it with every charm of nature, to please the mistress of his soul. Here I pass my sweetest hours: here Wil-

ham brings me news of Lady Julia; he is this moment returned; he saw her walking to the rustic temple, leaning on Emily Howard: he tells me she sighed as she past him. Oh! Mordaunt! was that sigh for me?

Not certain Lady Julia would forgive my being so near her, or a concealment which has so guilty an air, I have enjoined William secrecy even to his Anna, and bribed it by a promise of making him happy. My letters therefore come round by Mr. Herbert's, and it is three days before I receive them. I have not yet heard from Belmont, or my father. I am supposed to be still at Lord T——'s.

Ever an enthusiast, from warmth of heart and imagination, my whole soul is devoted to Lady Julia. I pass my days in carving that loved name on the rinds of the smoothest trees: and, when the good old man retires to his rest, William and I steal
forth

forth, and ride to the end of Belmont Park, where, having contemplated the dear abode of all that earth contains of lovely, and breathed an ardent prayer to Heaven for her happiness, I return to my rustic retreat, and wait patiently till the next evening brings back the same pleasing employment.

Since I left Belmont, I have never known happiness like what I now feel. Certain of her tenderness, tranquillity is restored to my soul: for ever employed in thinking of her, that painful restraint which company brought is removed; the scenes around me, and the dear solitude I enjoy, are proper to flatter a love-sick heart; my passion is soothed by the artless expression of William's; I make him sit hours talking of his Anna: he brings me every day intelligence of my angel; I see every hour the place which she inhabits. Am I not most happy? Her idea is perpetually before me; when

I walk in these sweet shades, so resembling those of Belmont, I look round as if expecting to behold her; I start at every sound, and almost fancy her lovely form in my view.

Oh! Mordaunt! what transport do I find in this sweet delirium of love! How eagerly do I expect the return of evening! Could I but once again behold her! once again swear eternal passion——I have a thousand things to say.

To

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 31

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

TUESDAY Morning.

I Have this moment a letter from Bell Hastings, which I fend you: I wish her here, yet know not how to press it, after so rational an apology.

To Lady ANNE WILMOT.

BEFORE I absolutely accept or refuse your Ladyship's generous invitation, allow me to account to you for my being in a place where you so little expected to find me; but which I am convinced you will acquiesce in my continuing in, when you know the motives which induced me to make choice of it.

E 5

When.

When my uncle married your Ladyship, you remember he left me in a convent at Paris, where I staid till his death. I should then have returned; but, having contracted a very great friendship for a young Lady of the first quality in England, she pressed me to continue there till her return, which was fixed for the year following. About three months before we intended to leave Paris, her brother arrived, on which occasion she left the convent, and went to spend her remaining time with an aunt who then resided in France, and who, being told I had staid the last year in complaisance to her amiable niece, insisted on my accompanying her. To spare a long narrative of common events, the brother of my friend became passionately in love with me, and I was so unhappy as to be too sensible to his tenderness: he entreated me to conceal our attachment from his sister for the present; professed the most honourable designs; told me he did not doubt of bringing his father to
consent

consent to a marriage, to which there could be no objection that was not founded in the most sordid avarice, and on which the happiness of his life depended.

The time of our intended return to England drawing near, he employed, and successfully, the power he had over my heart to influence my acceptance of an invitation given me, by a friend of my mother's, to accompany her to Florence, where I promised to stay till his return from Rome.

Too much in love, as he said, and I weakly believed, to support a longer absence, he came in a few months to Florence; we were then in the country with a Florentine Nobleman, whose Lady was related to my friend, to whom he was strongly recommended, and who gave him an invitation to his villa; which I need not tell you he accepted. We saw each other continually, but under a restraint, which, whilst it en-

creased our mutual passion, was equally painful to both. At length he contrived to give me a letter, pressing me to see him alone in the garden at an hour he mentioned. I went, and found the most beloved of men waiting for me in a grove of oranges. He saw me at a distance: I stopped by an involuntary impulse; he ran to me; he approached me with a transport which left me no room to doubt of his affection.

After an hour spent in vows of everlasting love, he pressed me to marry him privately; which I refused with an air of firmness but little suited to the state of my heart, and protested no consideration should ever induce me to give him my hand without the consent of his father.

He expressed great resentment of a resolution, which, he affirmed, was inconsistent with a real passion; pretended jealousy of a young Nobleman in the house, and artfully
hinted

hinted at returning immediately to England; then, softening his voice, implored my compassion, vowed he could not live without me; and so varied his behaviour from rage to the most seducing softness, that the fear of displeasing him, who was dearer to me than life, assisted by the tender persuasive eloquence of well-dissembled love, so far prevailed over the dictates of reason and strict honor, that, unable to resist his despair, I consented to a clandestine marriage: I then insisted on returning immediately to the house, to which he consented, though unwillingly, and, leaving me with all the exulting raptures of successful love, went to Florence to prepare a priest to unite us, promising to return with him in the morning: the next day passed, and the next, without my hearing of him; a whole week elapsed in the same manner: convinced of his affection, my fears were all for his safety; my imagination presented danger in every form, and, no longer able to support
the

the terrors of my mind filled with a thousand dreadful ideas, I sent a servant to enquire for him at the house where he lodged, who brought me word he had left Florence the very morning on which I expected his return. Those only who have loved like me can conceive what I felt at this news; but judge into what an abyss of misery I was plunged, on receiving a few hours after a letter from his sister, pressing me to return to her at Paris, where she was still waiting, in compliance with orders from home for her brother, who was to accompany her to England directly, to marry an heiress for whom he had been long intended by his father; she added that I must not lose a moment, for that her brother would, before I could receive the letter, be on the road to Paris.

Rage, love, pride, resentment, indignation, now tore my bosom alternately. After a conflict of different passions, I determined

ed on forgetting my unworthy lover, whose neglect appeared to me the contemptible insolence of superior fortune : I left the place the next day, as if for Paris ; but, taking the nearest way to England, came hither to a clergyman's widow, who had been a friend of my mother's ; to whom I told my story, and with whom I determined to stay concealed, till I heard the fate of my lover. I made a solemn vow, in the first heat of my resentment, never to write to him, or let him know my retreat, and, though with infinite difficulty, I have hitherto kept it. But what have I not suffered for this conduct, which, though my reason dictates, my heart condemns ! A thousand times have I been on the point of discovering myself to him, and at least giving him an opportunity of vindicating himself. I accused myself of injustice in condemning him unheard, and on appearances which might be false. So weak is a heart in love, that, though, when I chose my place of retreat, I was ignorant

norant of that circumstance, it was with pleasure, though a pleasure I endeavoured to hide from myself, that I heard it was only ten miles from his father's seat. I ought certainly to have changed it on this knowledge, but find a thousand plausible reasons to the contrary, and am but too successful in deceiving myself.

Convinced of the propriety of my conduct in avoiding him, I am not the more happy. My heart betrays me, and represents him continually to my imagination in the most amiable light, as a faithful lover, injured by my suspicions, and made wretched by my loss.

Torn by sentiments which vary every moment; the struggles of my soul have impaired my health, and will in time put an end to a life, to the continuance of which, without him, I am perfectly indifferent.

Deter-

Determined, however, to persist in a conduct, which, whatever I suffer from it, is certainly my duty, I cannot, as I hear he is returned, consent to come to Belmont; where it is scarce possible I should fail meeting a man of his rank, who must undoubtedly be of Lord Belmont's acquaintance.

'Till he is married, or I am convinced I have injured him, I will not leave this retreat; at least I will not appear where I am almost certain of meeting him whom I ought for ever to avoid.

Oh! Lady Anne! How severe is this trial! How painful the conquest over the sweetest affections of the human heart! How mortifying to love an object which one has ceased to esteem! Convinced of his unworthiness, my passion remains the same, nor will ever cease but with life: I at once despise and adore him: yes, my tenderness is, if possible, more lively than ever; and,
though

though he has doomed me to misery, I would die to contribute to his happiness.

You, Madam, will, I know, pity and forgive the inconsistencies of a heart ashamed of its own weaknesses, yet too sincere to disguise or palliate them. I am no stranger to your nobleness of sentiment; in your friendship and compassion all my hopes of tranquillity are founded. I will endeavour to conquer this ill-placed prepossession, and render myself more worthy your esteem. If his marriage with another makes it impossible for him to suppose I throw myself designedly in his way, I will go with you to town in the winter, and try if the hurry of the world can erase his image from my bosom. If he continues unconnected, and no accident clears up to me his conduct, I will continue where I am, and for ever hide my folly in this retreat.

I am, &c.

A. HASTINGS.

Poor

Poor Bell! how I pity her! Heaven certainly means love for our reward in another world, it so seldom makes it happy in this. But why do we blame Heaven? It is our own prejudices, our rage for wealth, our cowardly compliance with the absurd opinions of others, which robs us of all the real happiness of life.

I should be glad to know who this despicable fellow is: though really it is possible she may injure him. I must know his name, and find out whether or not she is torturing herself without reason. If he bears scrutinizing, our plans may coincide, and my jointure make us all happy; if not, he shall have the mortification of knowing she has an easy fortune; and of seeing her, what it shall be my business to make her next winter, one of the most fashionable women, and celebrated toasts, about town.

After

After all, are we not a little in the machine style, not to be able to withdraw our love when our esteem is at an end? I suppose one might find a philosophical reason for this in Newton's Laws of Attraction. The heart of a woman does, I imagine, naturally gravitate towards a handsome, well dressed, well-bred fellow, without enquiry into his mental qualities. Nay, as to that, do not let me be partial to you odious men; you have as little taste for mere internal charms as the lightest coquette in town. You talk sometimes of the beauties of the mind; but I should be glad, as somebody has said very well, to see one of you in love with a mind of threescore.

I am really sorry for Bell; but hope to bring her out of these heroics by Christmas. The town air, and being followed five or six weeks as a beauty, will do wonders. I know no specific for a love-fit like a constant round of pretty fellows.

The

The world, I dare say, will soon restore her to her senses; it is impossible she should ever regain them in a lonely village, with no company but an old woman.

How dearly we love to nurse up our follies! Bell, I dare say, fancies vast merit in this romantic constancy to a man who, if he knew her absurdity, would laugh at it.

I have no patience with my own sex, for their want of spirit.

FRIDAY Night.

O Heavens! who could have thought it? Of all the birds in the air, find me out Lord Melvin for Bell Hastings's lover: Nothing was ever so charming: I tell the story, which does his business here in a moment; serves my lovely Harry, and punishes the wretch's infidelity as it deserves. Adieu! I fly to communicate.

SATURDAY

SATURDAY Morning.

All this is very strange to me. Lord Belmont, to whom I last night mentioned Lord Melvin's connexion with Bell, as a reason against his marrying Lady Julia, assures me no such thing was ever intended; that he was amazed how I came to think so; that Lord Rochdale has other views for his son, to which, however, he is averse. I am glad to hear this last circumstance; and hope Bell has wronged him by her suspicions.

But who can this be that is intended for Lady Julia? I do not love to be impertinent; but my curiosity is rather excited. I shall not sleep till I am in this secret; I must follow my Lord about till I get a clue to direct me. How shall I begin the attack? "Really, my Lord, says I, this surprizes me extremely, I could have sworn Lord Melvin was the person your Lordship meant; if it is not him, who can it be?"

I

Yes,

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 95

Yes, this will do; I will go to him directly —— Cruel man! how he plays with my anxiety! He is gone out in a post-chaise with Lady Julia; the chaise drove from the door this moment.

I can say not a word more; I am on the rack of expectation; I could not be more anxious about a lover of my own.

“The heir of an earldom, and of an affluent fortune.” I have tortured my brain this hour, and not a scruple the nearer.

Adieu!

T

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

SATURDAY Morning.

OH! Mordaunt! I have seen her; have heard the sound of that enchanting voice; my Lord was in the chaise with her; they stopped to drink fresh cream; William presented her a nosegay; she thanked him with an air of sweetness, which would have won the soul of a savage. My heart beat with unutterable transport; it was with difficulty I restrained myself.

Mordaunt! I must return; I can no longer bear this absence: I will write this moment to Lord Belmont, and own my passion for his daughter: I will paint in the most lively colors my love and my despair: I will tell him I have nothing to hope from the world, and throw myself intirely on his friendship. I know the indiscretion of
4 this

this proceeding; I know I ought not to hope for success; but I have too long concealed my sentiments, and pursued a conduct unworthy of my heart.

I have wrote; I have sent away the letter. I have said all that can engage his heart in my favor; to-morrow he will receive my letter—To-morrow—O Mordaunt! how soon will my fate be determined! A chillness seizes me at the thought, my hand trembles, it is with difficulty I hold the pen. I have entreated an immediate answer; it will come inclosed to Mr. Herbert, to whom I have wrote to bring the letter himself. On Wednesday I shall be the most happy or most lost of mankind. What a dreadful interval will it be! My heart dies within me at the thought.

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

BELMONT, 18th September.

I AM commissioned by Lady Anne, my dear Mr. Mandeville, to insist on your immediate return; she declares she can no longer support the country without you, but shall die with chagrin and ennui; even play itself has lost half its charms in your absence. Lady Mary, my wife, and daughter, join in the same request; which I have a thousand reasons to press your complying with, as soon as is consistent with what politeness exacts in regard to Lord T——.

One, and not the weakest, is the pleasure I find in conversation, a pleasure I never taste more strongly than with you, and a pleasure which promiscuous visitors have for some time ceased to give me. I have not lost my relish for society, but it grows,
in

in spite of all my endeavors, more delicate. I have as great pleasure as ever in the conversation of select friends ; but I cannot so well bear the common run of company. I look on this delicacy as one of the infirmities of age, and as much a symptom of decay, as it would be to lose my taste for roast beef, and be able only to relish ortolans.

Lord Fondville is next week to marry Miss Westbrook ; they have a coach making, which is to cost a thousand pounds.

I am interrupted by a worthy man, to whom I am so sorry as to be able to do a service: to you I need make no other apology.

Adieu ! my amiable friend!

To Lady ANNE WILMOT.

Saturday, Grosvenor-street.

CAN the most refined of her sex, at the very moment when she owns herself shocked at Mrs. H——'s malicious insinuation, refuse to silence her by making me happy? Can she submit to one of the keenest evils a sensible and delicate mind can feel, only to inflict torment on the man whose whole happiness depends on her, and to whose tenderness she has owed herself not insensible?

Seeing your averseness to marriage, I have never pressed you on a subject which seemed displeasing to you, but left it to time and my unwearied love, to dissipate those unjust and groundless prejudices, which stood in the way of all my hopes: but does not this respect, this submission, demand

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 101

demand that you should strictly examine those prejudices, and be convinced, before you make it, that they deserve such a sacrifice?

Why will you, my dearest Lady Anne, urge your past unhappiness as a reason against entering into a state of which you cannot be a judge? You were never married; the soft consent of hearts, the tender sympathy of yielding minds, was wanting: forced by the will of a tyrannic father to take on you an insupportable yoke; too young to assert the rights of humanity; the freedom of your will destroyed; the name of marriage is profaned by giving it to so detestable an union.

You have often spoke with pleasure of those sweet hours we past at Sudley-Farm. Can you then refuse to perpetuate such happiness? Are there no charms in the unre-served converse of the man who adores
F 3 you?

you? Or can you prefer the unmeaning flattery of fools you despise, to the animated language of faithful love?

If you are still insensible to my happiness, will not my interest prevail on you to relent? My uncle, who has just lost his only son, offers to settle his whole estate on me, on condition I immediately marry; a condition it depends on you alone whether I shall comply with. If you refuse, he gives it on the same terms to a distant relation, whose mistress has a less cruel heart. Have you so little generosity as to condemn me at once to be poor and miserable; to lose the gifts both of love and fortune?

I have wrote to Lady Belmont to intercede for me, and trust infinitely more to her eloquence than my own.

The only rational objection to my happiness, my uncle's estate removes; you will
bring

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 103

bring me his fortune, and your own will make Bell Hastings happy: if you now refuse, you have the heart of a tigress, and delight in the misery of others.

Interrupted: my uncle: May all good angels guard the most amiable and lovely of women, and give her to her passionate

BELLVILLE!

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

MONDAY.

“**W**ILL you marry me, my dear Ally Croaker?” For ever this question, Bellville? And yet really you seem to be not at all in the secret. “Respect, submission”—I thought you had known the sex better: How should a modest woman ever be prevailed on by a respectful submissive lover? You would not surely have us——

Oh! Heavens! A billet. Some despairing innamorato: Indeed? Lord Melvin? He is not going to make love to me sure.

Very well; things are in a fine train. He writes me here as pretty an heroic epistle as one would desire, setting forth his passion for Bell Hastings, whom he has just discovered

discovered is my niece, and whom he declares he cannot live without; owning appearances are against him, and begging me to convey to her a long tidi didum letter, explaining the reasons and causes—The story is tedious, but the sum total is this: That he found at Florence the friend on earth he most loved, engaged in an affair of honor, in which he could not avoid taking part as his second; that they went to the last town in the Tuscan state, in order to escape into another, if any accident made it necessary to elude the pursuit of justice; that, to avoid suspicion, he left orders with his people to say he had left Florence: that he wrote to her by his valet, who was unfortunately seized and confined, the affair being suspected: that he was wounded, and obliged to stay some time before he could return to Florence, when he was informed she had left Italy; and, though he had omitted no means to find her, had never been so happy as to suc-

ceed: had made his sister, Lady Louisa, his confident, and by her assistance had almost prevailed on his father to consent.

“Almost prevailed on.” Really these are pretty airs. I shall write him an extremely stately answer, and let him know, if he expects Miss Hastings to do him the honor, his address must be in quite another style: Miss Hastings! in blood, in merit, in education, in every thing truly valuable, and in fortune too, if I please, his equal! I wish the foolish girl was not so madly in love with him, for I long to torture his proud heart: I cannot resist teasing him a little; but, as I know her weakness, and that we must come to at last, I shall be forced to leave a door of mercy open: I shall, however, insist on his family’s seeking the match, and on Lord Rochdale’s asking her of me in form; I will not yield a scruple of our dignity on this occasion.

But

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 107

But I must carry this Letter to Bell.

Adieu!

As to your foolish question, I may perhaps allow you to visit at Belmont; I will promise no more at present.

Did I tell you we all spent yesterday with my niece? She has the honor to please Lady Mary, who, on seeing her at a little distance with Lady Julia and me (no ill group certainly) insisted on our sitting next winter for a picture of the Graces dancing.

Or suppose, Madam, said I, the three Goddesses on mount Ida, with Harry Mandeville for our Paris?

Poor little Emily, being equally under size for a Grace or a Goddess, must be content to be a Hebe in a single piece.

Adio! Yours,

A. WILMOT.

F 6

To

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

London, September 19.

THIS event in Russia is most extraordinary: but these sudden and violent revolutions are the natural consequences of that instability which must ever attend despotic forms of government: Happy Britain! where the laws are equally the guard of prince and people, where liberty and prerogative go hand in hand, and mutually support each other; where no invasion can ever be made on any part of the constitution, without endangering the whole: where popular clamor, like the thunder-storm, by agitating, clears and purifies the air, and, its business done, subsides.

If this letter finds you at Lord T——'s, I would have you return immediately to Belmont, where I shall be in a few days.

Lady

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 109

Lady Mary is already there, and intends to execute the design Lord Belmont mentioned to you, which makes your presence there absolutely necessary.

The tide of fortune, my dear Harry, seems turning in your favor; but let it not harden your heart to the misfortunes of your fellow-creatures, make you insolent to merit in the vale of humbler life, or tempt you to forget that all you possess is the gift of that beneficent Power, in whose sight virtue is the only distinction.

The knowledge I have of your heart makes these cautions perhaps unnecessary; but you will forgive the excessive anxiety of paternal tenderness, alarmed at the near prospect of your tasting the poison most fatal to youth, the intoxicating cup of prosperity.

May

May Heaven, my dearest Harry, continue you all you are at present! Your father has not another wish!

Adieu!

J. MANDEVILLE.

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

TUESDAY Morning.

I Staid late last night with Bell; there is no telling you her transport: she agrees with me, however, as to the propriety of keeping up our dignity; and has consented, though with infinite reluctance, not to admit Lord Melvin's visits till his father hath made propofals to me. She is to see him first at Belmont, whither she removes in four or five days. Emily Howard is gone, at my request, to spend that interval with her. We have a divine scheme
in

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. III

in our heads, which you are not yet to be honored with the knowledge of.

Oh! do you know I have this morning discovered why Lady Mary is a Tory? She has been flattered by Bolingbroke, and sung by Atterbury; had Addison tuned his lyre to her praise, she had certainly changed parties. I am seldom at a loss to explore the source of petticoat-politics. Vanity is the moving spring in the female-machine, as Interest is in the male. Certainly our principle of action is by much more noble.

Eleven o'Clock.

“ Lord, What is come to my mother?”
She is gone smiling into Lady Mary's room;
her air is gay beyond measure; it is she must
fit for a dancing Grace.

There

Past Twelve.

There is something in agitation with which I am unacquainted. Lord and Lady Belmont have been an hour in close consultation with Lady Mary: la bella Julia is this moment summoned to attend them. This unknown lover: I tremble for Harry: should another —

Almost One.

I Have your letter: this Russian event —true—as you say, these violent convulsions—Yes, you are right; your reflexions are perfectly just, but my thoughts are at present a little engaged. This consultation I fear bodes Harry no good—Should my Lord's authority—I am on the rack of impatience —

The door opens; Lady Julia comes this way; she has been in tears; I tremble at
the

the sight — Bellville, they are not tears of sorrow; they are like the dew-drops on the morning rose, she looks a thousand times more lovely through them; her eyes have a melting languishment, a softness inexpressible, a sensibility mixed with transport — There is an animation in her look, a blush of unexpected happiness — She moves with the lightness of a wood-nymph — Lady Belmont follows with a serene joy in that amiable countenance. They approach; they are already in my apartment.

Adio!

Bellville! In what words — How shall I explain to you — I am breathless with pleasure and surprise — My Lord — Harry Mandeville — Lady Julia — They were always intended for each other.

A letter from Harry this morning, confessing his passion for Lady Julia, determined

mined them to make an immediate discovery—Read the enclosed letters, and adore the goodness of Providence, which leads us, by secret ways, to that happiness our own wisdom could never arrive at.

To Colonel MANDEVILLE.

Belmont, August 10, 1752.

My dear Col.

BY a clause in the patent, which has been hitherto kept secret in our part of the family, it is provided, that, on default of heirs male in the younger branch, the title of Earl of Belmont should go to the elder: in favor also of this disposition, the greatest part of the estate then in our possession, which is about half what I now enjoy, is, by a deed, in which, however, my lawyer tells me there is a flaw which makes

makes it of no effect, annexed to the title for ever. Julia being the only child we ever had, it is very probable the estate and title will be yours: Heaven having blest you with a son, it would be infinitely agreeable to me, and would keep up the splendor of our name, to agree on an inter-marriage between our children. I would have you educate your son with this view, and at an expence becoming the heir of the titles and possessions of our family: but, as it is possible I may yet have a son; in that case, Lady Mary, our relation, whose heart is greatly set on this marriage, will settle her estate on yours, and I will give him my daughter, with twenty thousand pounds.

I insist on being at the whole expence of his education as my heir; as the estate will probably be his own, it is only anticipating his rents a few years, and does not lay him under the shadow of an obligation.

I have

I have mentioned above, that there is a defect in the deed, which puts it in my power to rob you of your right in the estate: but, as the design of our ancestor is clear, I take no merit to myself from not being the most infamous of mankind, which I should be, were I capable of making use of such a circumstance to your disadvantage.

But, could I reconcile so base an action to myself in a private light, no consideration could make it easy to me in a public one: I know nothing so dangerous to our happy constitution as an indigent nobility, chained down to a necessity of court-dependence, or tempted, by making faction the tool of ambition, to disturb the internal peace of their country. Men who are at ease in their fortunes are generally good subjects; the preservation of what they have is a powerful tie of obedience: it is the needy, the dissolute, the Cæsars, the Catilines of the world,

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 117

who raise the storms which shake the foundation of government.

You will imagine, my dear friend, I only intend this alliance to take place, if their sentiments, when of age to judge for themselves, correspond with our intentions for their happiness. That this may be the case, let us educate them, with the utmost care, in every accomplishment of mind and person, which can make them lovely in the eyes of each other.

Let me, my dear Colonel, hear immediately if this proposal is as agreeable to you as to

Your faithful and affectionate

BELMONT.

To

To the Earl of BELMONT.

My Lord,

I AM greatly obliged to your Lordship for a proposal which does my son such honor; and for a conduct towards us both so noble and worthy your character.

The disposition you mention is what I have sometimes hoped, but knew your Lordship's honor and integrity too well to think it necessary to make any enquiry; convinced, if a settlement was made in my favor, you would in due time make me acquainted with it: till some probability appeared of its taking place, it was, perhaps, better concealed than disclosed.

The alliance your Lordship proposes, if it ever takes place, will make me the happiest of mankind: having, however, observed marriages made by parents in the
childhood

chilhood of the parties, to be generally disagreeable to the latter, whether from the perverseness of human nature, or the free spirit of love impatient of the least controul, will intreat our design may be kept secret from all the world, and in particular from the young people themselves: all we can do is, to give them such an education as will best improve the gifts of nature, and render them objects of that lively and delicate affection, which alone can make such a connexion happy. Perhaps it may be best to separate them till the time when the heart is most susceptible of tenderness; least an habitual intercourse should weaken that impression, which we wish their perfections to make on each other. Both at present promise to be lovely; and, if we guard against other attachments, the charm of novelty, added to what nature has done for them, and those acquired graces which it is our part to endeavor to give them, can
scarce

scarce fail of inspiring a mutual passion, which ones seeming to desire it would probably prevent.

If I am so happy as to have your Lordship's concurrence in these sentiments, I will remove my son immediately from your neighbourhood, and educate him in town; at a proper time he shall go, with a private tutor of birth and merit, to the university, and from thence make the tour of Europe, whilst Lady Julia is advancing in every charm, under the eye of the most excellent of mothers.

Men, who act a conspicuous part on the stage of life, and who require a certain audacity and self-possession to bring their talents into full light, cannot, in my opinion, have too public an education: but women, whose loveliest charm is the rosy blush of native modesty, whose virtues blossom fairest
in

in the vale, should never leave their household gods, the best protectors of innocence,

It is also my request, that my son may be educated in a total ignorance of the settlement in our favor, both because the effect of it may possibly be destroyed by your Lordship's having a son, and because he will taste the pleasures of a distinguished station, if he ever arrives at it, with double relish, if bred with more moderate expectations. He will by this means too escape the pernicious snares of flattery, the servile court of interested inferiors, and all the various mischiefs which poison the minds of young men bred up as heirs to great estates and titles: he will see the hatefulness of pride and arrogance in others, before he is tempted to be guilty of them himself; he will learn to esteem virtue, without those trappings of wealth and greatness which he will never hope to be possessed of; he will see the

world as it is, by not being of consequence enough to be flattered or deceived.

His education, his company, his expences, shall, however, be suited to the rank he may one day possibly fill; my acquaintance with foreign courts enables me to introduce him every where to those of the first rank and merit; his equipage and attendance shall be such as may secure him general respect.

Your Lordship's generous offer of bearing the expence of his education deserves my sincerest gratitude; but œconomy will enable me to support it without the least inconvenience to my affairs; half my income, which I will spare to him, with his mother's fortune, which shall all be devoted to this purpose, will be sufficient to give him an education becoming the heir of your Lordship's fortune and honors.

May

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 123

May Heaven prosper a design, which has
so laudable an end in view, as the future
happiness of our children.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's

Affectionate and

Obedient Servant,

J. MANDEVILLE.

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

WEDNESDAY Morning.

THIS joy is a prodigious enemy to
sleep. Lady Julia rose this morning
with the sun; I dare say she never thought
he looked so bright; before he sets, she will
see the most charming of mankind. My Lord
yesterday sent an express to Lord T——'s,

with orders to follow Harry wherever he was, and bring him this evening to Belmont: Lady Mary is to have the pleasure of making him acquainted with his happiness: the discovery was only delayed, till convinced of their passion for each other.

Colonel Mandeville is in town, directing the drawing of the writings; and comes down in a few days to have them executed.

I have had a second letter from Lord Melvin, as respectful as the pride of woman can desire: a postscript from Lord Rochdale having satisfied me in point of decorum, I allow his son to visit here when he pleases. My niece and Emily Howard come this evening; Lady Julia is now with them; I suppose we shall see Lord Melvin to-morrow: if he is very pressing, they may, perhaps, be married with Lady Julia.

Heavens!

Heavens! Bellville! What a change in all our affairs! The matrimonial star prevails; it would be strange if I should be betrayed into the party: and yet, Lady Mary has drawn so bewitching a plan of a wedding-day, as might seduce a more determined coquette. If one could be married for that day only — Or if one was sure of pleasing for ever like Lady Belmont — ‘Dear madam, said I, if your Ladyship would lend me your Cestus.’ “You are already possessed of it, my dear Lady Anne; the delicacy and purity of a bride will always give you the charms of one.”

I believe her Ladyship may be in the right; it is not the state, but the foolish conduct of people who enter into it, that makes it unhappy.

If you should come down with Colonel Mandeville, it is impossible to say what may happen.

Absolutely, Bellville, if I do condescend, which is yet extremely doubtful, we will live in the style of lovers; I hate the dull road of common marriages: no impertinent presuming on the name of husband; no faucy freedoms; I will continue to be courted, and shall expect as much flattery, and give myself as many scornful airs, as if I had never honored you with my hand.

I give you warning, I shall make a most intolerable wife; but that is your business, not mine.

This very day fe'nnight, which is Lady Julia's birth-day, is intended for her marriage; the house is to be full of company, invited to celebrate the day, without knowing on what further account; nobody is
even

even to suspect them to be lovers; they are to go privately out of Lady Mary's apartment into the chapel, where my Lord chuses the ceremony should be performed. We are to have a masquerade in a grand open pavilion, on Corinthian pillars, built for this happy occasion in the garden, opposite the house, which is to be in view finely illuminated: the intermediate space is to be adorned with lamps, intermixed with festoons of flowers in the trees, round which are to be seats for the villagers, who are never forgot on these days of annual rejoicings.

Lady Mary, who is mistress of the ceremonies, and who insists on joining all our hands that day, has engaged you for the ball to Lady Julia, Harry to Bell Hastings, and Lord Melvin to me: our situation is to be kept secret for a week, which is to be filled up with various scenes of festivity; after which, we are to go to

town to be presented; and from thence on a tour of six months to Italy. This is her scheme; but it depends on Bell Hastings and me whether it shall be executed in full: ten thousand to one but our cruelty spoils the prettiest mysterious plan of a wedding that can be. Absolutely Lady Mary has a kind of an idea of things—I cannot conceive how she came by it—Not the least symptom of an old maid in this plan—Something so fanciful and like a love affair!—It is a thousand pities her Ladyship would not be of the party herself. Do you know never a sprightly old courtier of the Queen's time?

My Lord is so pleased with the thought of seeing us all happy, that he has given orders for building a temple to Love and Friendship, at a little villa which the Colonel has given him, and which is almost central in respect to all our houses; here we
are

are to meet once a week, and exclude the rest of the world.

Harry and Lady Julia are to live at Lady Mary's seat, about ten miles from hence; and I have fixed on a house, which is to be sold, at about the same distance.

And now, Bellville, to be very serious, I should be the happiest creature in the world in this prospect, if I was not afraid of my own conduct. I am volatile, light, extravagant, and capricious; qualities ill suited to a matrimonial life. I know my faults, but am not able to mend them: I see the beauty of order in the moral world, yet doat to excess on irregularity.

Call on Colonel Mandeville, and concert your journey together. Heaven and earth! What have I not said in that permission? With all my affection for you, there is a solemnity in the idea—Oh! Bellville! should I

ever become less dear to you ! should coldness, should indifference ever take place of that lively endearing tenderness—I will throw away the pen for a moment——

The most amiable of men will forgive the too anxious fears of excessive love: I with transport make him the arbiter of my future days. Lady Julia is come back, and has brought me the enclosed bond, by which Bell Hastings engages to pay you thirty thousand pounds on the day of my marriage. Her letter to you will explain this further.

Twelve o'Clock.

Ah ! cor mio ! son confuso ! Yes, I blush at saying in express words what I have already said by deduction. Your uncle insists on a positive “I will”: How can the dear old man be so cruel ? Tell him, if he is not satisfied with this letter, he shall dictate the form of consent himself.

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 131

One condition, however, I shall not dispense with; that he comes down to Belmont, and opens the ball with Lady Mary.

Adio!

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

WEDNESDAY, Three o'Clock.

I Really cannot help feeling prodigiously foolish about this marriage; it is a thousand to one but I retreat yet: prepare yourself for a disappointment, for I am exceedingly on the capricious.

Oh! Heavens! I forgot to tell you, an old match-making Lady in the neighbourhood, having taken it into her head I have a passion for Harry Mandeville, and designing to win my heart by persuading me to what she supposes I have a mind to, recom-

G 6

mended.

mended him strongly to me last night for a husband. I heard her with the utmost attention; and, when she had finished her harangue, blushed, looked down, hesitated, and denied the thing with so pretty a confusion, that she is gone away perfectly convinced I am to be Lady Anne Mandeville, and will tell it as a secret all round the country. I am not sorry for this; as it will take away all suspicion of what is really intended, and secure that secrecy we wish on the occasion. The good old Lady went away infinitely delighted at being possessed of a quality secret, which in the country gives no little importance; pleased too with her own penetration in discovering what nobody else has suspected, I cannot conceive a happier being than she is at present.

I have just received from town the most divine stomacher and sleeve-knots you ever beheld: "An interesting event!" Yes, creature,

creature, and what I can plead authority for mentioning. Did not Mademoiselle, Princess of the blood of France, granddaughter of Henry the Great, write some half a dozen volumes, to inform posterity, that, on Saturday the 14th of November 1668, she wore her blue ribbands? Surely you men think nothing of consequence but sieges and battles: now, in my sentiments, it would be happy for mankind, if all the heroes, who make such havock amongst their species merely because they have nothing to do, would amuse themselves with sorting suits of ribbands for their ladies.

I am in the sweetest good humour to-day that can be imagined, so mild and gentle you would be amazed; a little impatient indeed for the evening, which is to bring my charming Harry.

I have been asking my Lord how, with Harry's sensibility, they contrived to keep
him

him so long free from attachments. In answer to which, he gave me the enclosed sketch of a letter, from Colonel Mandeville to a Lady of his acquaintance at Rome, which he said would give me a general notion of the matter.

To the Countess MELESPINI.

Paris, June 24, 1759.

MADAM,

YOU will receive this from the hands of that son I have before had the honor of recommending to your esteem.

I have accompanied him myself hither; where, being perfectly satisfied with his behavior, and convinced that generous minds are best won to virtue by implicit confidence, I have dismissed the tutor I intended to have sent with him to Italy, shall return to
England

England myself, and depend for his conduct on his own discretion, his desire of obliging me, and that nobleness of sentiment which will make him feel the value of my friendship for him in its utmost extent.

I have given him letters to the most worthy person in every court I intend he should visit; but, as my chief dependence for the advantages of this tour are on the Count and yourself, I have advised him to spend most of his time at Rome, where, honored by your friendship, I doubt not of his receiving that last finishing, that delicate polish, which, I flatter myself, if not deceived by the fondness of a parent, is all he wants to make him perfectly amiable.

To you, Madam, and the Count, I commit him; defend him from the snares of vice and the contagion of affectation.

You

You receive him an unexperienced youth, with lively passions, a warm and affectionate heart, an enthusiastic imagination, probity, openness, generosity; and all those advantages of person and mind, which a liberal education can bestow. I expect him from your hands a gentleman, a man of honor and politeness, with the utmost dignity of sentiment and character, adorned by that easy elegance, that refined simplicity of manner, those unaffected graces of deportment, so difficult to describe, but which it is scarce possible to converse much with you without acquiring.

Sensible of the irresistible power of beauty, I think it of the utmost consequence with what part of the female world he converses. I have from childhood habituated him to the conversation of the most lovely and polite amongst the best part of the sex, to give him an abhorrence to the indelicacy of the worst. I have endeavoured to impress on
his

his mind, the most lively ideas of the native beauty of virtue; and to cultivate in him that elegance of moral taste, that quick sensibility, which is a nearer way to rectitude, than the dull road of inanimate precept.

Continuing the same anxious cares, I send him to perfect his education, not in schools or academies, but in the conversation of the most charming amongst women: the ardent desire of pleasing you, and becoming worthy your esteem, inseparable from the happiness of knowing you, will be the keenest spur to his attainments; and I shall see him return all the fond heart of a parent can wish, from his ambition of being honored with your friendship.

To you, Madam, I shall make no secret of my wish, that he may come back to England unconnected. I have a view for him beyond his most sanguine hopes, to
which,

which, however, I entreat he may be a stranger; the charms of the Lady cannot fail of attaching a heart which has no prepossession, from which, I conjure you, if possible, to guard him. I should even hear with pleasure you permitted him, to a certain degree, to love you, that he might be steeled to all other charms. If he is half as much in love with you as his father, all other beauties will lay snares for him in vain.

I am, MADAM,

With the most lively esteem,

Your obedient and devoted,

J. MANDEVILLE.

Oh! Heavens! whilst I have been writing, and thinking nothing of it, the pavilion, which it seems has been some time prepared, is raised opposite the window of the saloon, at the end of a walk leading to the house. We are to sup in it this evening: it is charming;

mante; the sight of it, and the idea of its destination, makes my heart palpitate a little. Mon Dieu! that ever I should be seduced into matrimony!

Farewel for an hour or two.

You have no notion what divine dresses we have making for the masquerade. I shall not tell you particulars, as I would not take off the pleasure of surprize; but they are charming beyond conception.

Do you not doat on a masquerade, Bellville? For my own part, I think it is the quintessence of all sublunary joys; and, without flattering my Lord's taste, I have a strange fancy this will be the most agreeable one I ever was at in my life: the scenes, the drapery, the whole disposition of it is enchanting.

Heavens! How little a while will it be that I can write myself,

A. WILMOT.

To

TO GEORGE MORDAUNT, Esq;

WEDNESDAY Morning.

AFTER four days past in anxiety not to be told, this ardently-expected morning is come; I every moment expect Mr. Herbert; I tremble at every sound: another hour, and the happiness of my whole life will be for ever determined: Mordaunt, the idea chills my soul.

It is now a week since I have heard from Belmont; not a line from Emily Howard, or Lady Anne; the unhappy have few friends; Lord Melvin is the minion of fortune; he has taken my place in their esteem.

The time is past, and my friend is not here; he has therefore no letters from Lord Belmont; I rated his disinterestedness too high;

high: misled by the mean despicable maxims of the world, he repents my passion for his daughter; he gives her to another, without deigning even to send me an answer: he might surely have respected his own blood. My soul is on fire at this insult: his age, his virtues, protect him; but Lord Melvin — let him avoid my fury.

Yet am I not too rash? May not some accident have retarded my friend? I will wait patiently till evening; I cannot believe Lord Belmont — May he not have seen me, and, suspecting some clandestine design — Yes, my folly has undone me; what can he think of such a concealment? —

Mordaunt! I cannot live in this suspense; I will send William this moment to Belmont.

Five o'Clock.

William is come back, and has thrown me into despair: yes, my friend, it is now beyond a doubt.

Lady

Lady Julia is intended for Lord Melvin; the most splendid preparations are making; all is joy and festivity at Belmont; a wretch like me is below their thoughts; messengers are hourly coming and going from Lord Rochdale's: it is past, and I am doomed to despair: my letter has only hastened my destruction; has only hastened this detested marriage: over-awed by paternal authority, she gives me up, she marries another; she has forgot her vows, those vows which she called on Heaven to witness: I have lost all for which life was worth my care.

Mordaunt! I am no longer master of myself. Lord Melvin is this moment gone past to Belmont, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom; his eyes sparkle with new fire; his cheek has the glow of happy love. This very hour, perhaps, he calls her his — this very hour her consenting blushes — the idea is insupportable —

able—First may the avenging bolt of Heaven—But why supplicate Heaven?—My own arm—I will follow him—I will not tamely resign her—He shall first—Yes, through my blood alone—What I intend I know not—My thoughts are all distraction!

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

Seven o'Clock.

WE expect the caro Enrico every moment: my chariot is gone for Emily Howard and my niece; Lord Melvin too comes this evening by my permission. Lady Julia has just asked me to walk with her in the park; she wants to hear me talk of Harry, whom she cannot mention herself, though her thoughts are full of nothing else; her color comes and goes; her eyes have a double portion of softness; her heart beats with apprehensive pleasure. What an evening of transport will this be! Why are you not here, Bellville? I shall absolutely

lutely be one of the old people to-night. Can you form an idea of happiness equal to Harry's? Raised from the depth of despair, to the fruition of all his wishes. I long to see how he will receive the first mention of this happy turn of fortune: but Lady Mary has reserved all that to herself.

Adieu!

Great God! to what a scene have I been witness! How shall I relate the shocking particulars?

Lady Julia and I were advanced about a quarter of a mile from the house, blessing Providence, and talking of the dear hope of future happy days; she was owning her passion with blushes, and all the tremor of modest sensibility, when we were interrupted by the clashing of swords behind some trees near us; we turned our heads, and saw Lord Melvin, distraction in his air, his sword bloody, supporting Harry Mandeville,

ville, pale, bleeding, motionless, and, to all appearance, in the agonies of death. Lady Julia gave a shriek, and fell senseless in my arms. My cries brought some of the servants, who happened to be near; part of them, with Lord Melvin, conveyed Harry to the house; whilst the rest staid with me to take care of Lady Julia.

Harry was scarce out of sight when she recovered her senses; she looked wildly towards the place where she first saw him, then, starting from me, raising her eyes to Heaven, her hands clasped together — Oh! Bellville! never shall I lose the idea of that image of horror and despair — she neither spoke nor shed a tear — there was an eager wildness in her look, which froze my soul with terror: she advanced hastily towards the house, looking round her every moment, as if expecting again to see him, till, having exhausted all her strength, she sunk down breathless on one of the seats, where I supported her till my Lord's cha-

riot, which I had sent for, came up, in which I placed myself by her, and we drove slowly towards the house: she was put to-bed in a burning fever, preceded by a shivering, which gives me apprehensions for her, which I endeavour to conceal from the wretched parents, whose sorrows mock all description.

My Lord is just come from Lord Melvin, who insisted on being his prisoner, till Harry was out of danger; disdaining to fly from justice, since my Lord refuses his stay at Belmont, he intreats to be given into the hands of some gentleman near. My Lord has accepted this offer, and named his father Lord Rochdale for the trust. He is gone under the best guard, his own honor, in which Lord Belmont has implicit confidence.

I have been into Lady Julia's room; she takes no notice of any thing. Emily
Howard

Howard kneels weeping by her bedside. Lady Belmont melts my soul when I behold her; she sits motionless as the statue of Despair; she holds the hand of her lovely daughter between hers, she presses it to her bosom, and the tears steal silently down her cheeks.

Unable to bear the sight, I am returned to my apartment.

Oh! Bellville! How is this scene of happiness changed! Where are now the gay transporting hopes which warmed our hearts this morning?

I have with difficulty prevailed on Lady Mary, who droops under this weight of affliction, and whose years are ill-suited to scenes of horror, to set out this evening for her own seat; my niece, whose sorrow you may easily imagine, is to accompany her thither: if Mr. Mandeville dies, mur-

dered by the hand of him with whose fate hers is connected, never must she again enter these hospitable doors.

Bellville! how is the gay structure of ideal happiness fallen in one moment to the ground!

The messenger who was sent to Lord T——'s is returned, and has brought my Lord's letter; he went from thence to Mr. Herbert's, where Mr. Mandeville was supposed to be, but found nobody there but a servant, from whom he could get no information. The family had been gone five days to London, being sent for express to a relation who was dying.

Oh! Bellville! how many accidents have conspired — I myself have innocently contributed to this dreadful event, misled by my Lord's equivocal expressions, which seemed to point so plainly at Lord Melvin—

vin — If he dies — But I will not give way to so shocking an idea. The servant who went for a surgeon is not yet returned; till his wounds are examined, we must be in all the torture of suspense and apprehension.

Eleven o'Clock.

The surgeon is come; he is now with Mr. Mandeville: how I dread to hear his sentence! — The door opens — He comes out with Lord Belmont; horror is in the face of the latter — Oh! Bellville! my pre-faging heart — they advance towards me — I am unable to meet them — my limbs tremble — a cold dew —

Bellville! his wounds are mortal — the pen drops from my hand —

A farmer's son in the neighbourhood has just brought the enclosed letter for Mr. Mandeville, which, not knowing the consequence, my Lord has opened.

TO HENRY MANDEVILLE, Esq;

LONDON, TUESDAY Morning.

S I R,

THE generous concern you have been pleased to take in my misfortunes, leaves me no room to doubt I shall give you pleasure by informing you that they are at an end; a rich relation, who is just expired, having made a will in my favor, which places me in circumstances beyond my hopes. But you will be still more happy to know you have contributed to this turn of my fortune. The express
was

was arrived, with a request from our dying friend, that we would instantly come post to town, and we were lamenting our hard fate in being unable, from our indigence, to undertake a journey on which so much depended, when the post brought me a bill for one hundred pounds, which could come from no hand but yours: I wish the world was such as to make it easy for us to mistake. We set out with hearts filled with the sincerest gratitude to Heaven, and the most worthy of men; and, on our arrival, found deferring our journey, even a few hours, would have been fatal to all our hopes.

To you, therefore, to whom we owe the means of taking this journey, we owe the ease of fortune which has been the consequence of it. Heaven has been pleased to make the man on earth we most esteem the instrument of its goodness to us.

The hurry of spirits in which we set out prevented my leaving a direction for you with my servant, which I hope has been of no ill consequence. I have to-day sent him a direction, and ordered him to wait on you with this letter. As soon as my affairs here are settled, will replace the money your generous friendship has assisted us with, wherever you please to order.

I am, with the most lively esteem,

S I R,

Your most affectionate,

And obedient Servant,

W. HERBERT.

Bellville! is it not hard the exercise of the noblest virtue should have been attended with such fatal effects? He dies for having alleviated the distresses of his friend, for having sympathized in the affliction of others.

To

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

THURSDAY Morning.

THE most lovely of men is no more ;
he expired early this morning, after having in my presence owned to my Lord, that jealousy was the true cause of his attacking Lord Melvin, who only fought in his own defence ; which he intreated him publicly to attest, and to beg Lord Melvin's pardon, in his name, for insults which madness alone could excuse, and which it was not in man to bear ; he owned Lord Melvin's behavior in the duel had been noble ; and that he had avoided giving him the least wound, till, urged by fury and despair, and aiming at the life of his generous enemy rather than at his own defence, he had rushed on the point of his sword.

He expressed great indifference for life on his own account, but dreaded the effect his death might have on the most tender of fathers: intreated my Lord to soften so painful a stroke by preparing him for it by degrees, and, if possible, to conceal from him the shocking manner of it. "How ill, said he, has my rashness repaid him for all his anxious cares, his indulgent goodness! I suffer justly; but for him — Great God! support him in the dreadful trial, and pour all thy blessings on his head!"

He then proceeded to expostulate gently with Lord Belmont on his supposed design of forcing the heart of his daughter, and on that neglect of himself which had planted the furies of jealousy in his breast, and occasioned this shocking event. These reproaches brought on an explanation of the situation to which his danger had reduced Lady Julia, of my Lord's intention
of

of giving her to him, and of the whole plan of purposed happiness, which his impatience, irritated by a series of unforeseen accidents, had so fatally destroyed.

Till now, he had appeared perfectly composed; but, from the moment my Lord began to speak, a wildness had appeared in his countenance, which rose, before he ended, to little less than distraction; he raved, he reproached Heaven itself; then, melting into tears, prayed with fervor unspeakable for Lady Julia's recovery: the agitation of his mind caused his wounds to bleed afresh; successive faintings were the consequence, in one of which he expired.

Lord Belmont is now writing to Colonel Mandeville. How many has this dreadful event involved in misery!

Who shall tell this to Lady Julia? Yet how conceal it from her? I dread the most

fatal effects from her despair, when returning reason makes her capable of knowing her own wretchedness; at present, she is in a state of perfect insensibility; her fever is not the least abated; she has every symptom which can indicate danger. Lady Belmont and Emily Howard have never left her bedside a moment. I have with difficulty persuaded them to attempt to rest a few hours, and am going to take Lady Belmont's place by her bedside.

Ten o'Clock.

The physician is gone; he thinks Lady Julia in danger, but has not told this to the family: I am going again to her apartment; she has not yet taken notice of any body.

I had been about half an hour in Lady Julia's room, when, having sent the last attendant away for something I wanted, she looked round, and saw we were alone; she

she half raised herself in the bed, and, grasping my hand, fixed her enquiring eyes ardently on mine. I too well understood their meaning, and, unable to hide my grief, was rising to leave the bedside, when catching hold of me, with a look and air which froze my soul; "Lady Anne," said she, "does he live?" My silence, and the tears which I could not conceal, explained to her the fatal truth, when, raising her streaming eyes and supplicating hands to Heaven——Oh! Bellville; no words can describe the excess of her sorrow and despair;—fearful of the most fatal instant effects, I was obliged to call her attendants, of whose entrance she took not the least notice. After remaining some time absorbed in an agony of grief, which took from her all power of utterance, and made her insensible to all around her, the tears, which she shed in great abundance, seemed to give her relief: my heart was melted; I wept with her. She saw my tears; and,
 pressing

pressing my hand tenderly between hers, seemed to thank me for the part I took in her afflictions: I had not opposed the torrent of her despair; but, when I saw it subsiding, endeavoured to soothe her with all the tender attention and endearing sympathy of faithful friendship; which so far succeeded, that I have left her more composed than I could have imagined it possible she should so soon have been; she has even an appearance of tranquillity which amazes me; and, seeming inclined to take rest, I have left her for that purpose.

May Heaven restore her to her wretched Parents, whose life is wrapt in hers! May it inspire her with courage to bear this stroke, the severest a feeling mind can suffer! Her youth, her sweetness of temper, her unaffected piety, her filial tenderness, sometimes flatter me with a hope of her recovery; but when I think on that melting sensibility, on that exquisitely tender heart,
which

which bleeds for the sorrow of every human being, I give way to all the horrors of despair.

Lady Julia has sent to speak with me: I will not a moment delay attending her. How blest should I be, if the sympathizing bosom of Friendship could soften by partaking her sorrows!

Oh! Bellville! what a request has she made! my blood runs back at the idea.

She received me with a composed air, begged me to sit down by her bedside, and, sending away her attendants, spoke as follows; "You are, I doubt not, my dear Lady Anne, surprized at the seeming tranquil manner in which I bear the greatest of all misfortunes—Yes, my heart doated on him, my love for him was unutterable—But it is past; I can no longer be deceived by the fond delusion
" of

“ of hope. I submit to the will of Hea-
“ ven. My God! I am resigned, I do
“ not complain of what thy hand has in-
“ flicted; a few unavailing tears alone —
“ Lady Anne, you have seen my calmness,
“ you have seen me patient as the trembling
“ victim beneath the sacrificer’s knife. Yet
“ think not I have resigned all sensibility :
“ no, were it possible I could live — But I
“ feel my approaching end; Heaven in
“ this is merciful. That I bear this dread-
“ ful stroke with patience, is owing to the
“ certainty I shall not long survive him,
“ that our separation is but for a moment.
“ Lady Anne, I have seen him in my
“ dreams: his spotless soul yet waits for
“ mine: yes, the same grave shall receive
“ us; we shall be joined to part no more.
“ All the sorrow I feel is for my dear pa-
“ rents; to you and Emily Howard I leave
“ the sad task of comforting them; by all
“ our friendship, I adjure you, leave them
“ not to the effects of their despair: when
“ I reflect

" I reflect on all their goodness, and on
" the misery I have brought on their grey
" hairs, my heart is torn in pieces, I lament that such a wretch was ever created.

" I have been to blame; not in loving
" the most perfect of human beings; but
" in concealing that love, and distrusting
" the indulgence of the best of parents.
" Why did I hide my passion? Why conceal sentiments only blameable on the
" venal maxims of a despicable world?
" Had I been unreserved, I had been happy:
" but Heaven had decreed otherwise, and
" I submit.

" But whither am I wandering? I sent
" for you to make a request; a request in
" which I will not be denied. Lady Anne,
" I would see him; let me be raised and
" carried to his apartment before my mother returns; let me once more behold
" him,

“ him, behold him for whom alone life was
“ dear to me : you hesitate, for pity do not
“ oppose me ; your refusal will double the
“ pangs of death.”

Overcome by the earnestness of her air and manner, I had not resolution to refuse her ; her maids are now dressing her, and I have promised to attend her to his apartment.

I am summoned. Great God ! How shall I bear a scene like this ? I tremble, my limbs will scarce support me.

Twelve o’Clock.

This dreadful visit is yet unpaid : three times she approached the door, and returned as often to her apartment, unable to enter the room ; the third time she fainted away : her little remaining strength being exhausted, she has consented to defer her
purpose

purpose till evening: I hope by that time to persuade her to decline it wholly: faint, and almost sinking under her fatigue, I have prevailed with her to lie down on a couch: Emily Howard sits by her, kissing her hand, and bathing it with her tears.

I have been enquiring at Lady Julia's door; she is in a sweet sleep, from which we have every thing to hope: I fly to tell this to Lady Belmont — She will live; Heaven has heard our prayers. —

I found the wretched mother pouring out her soul before her God, and imploring his mercy on her child — She heard me, and tears of tender transport — she raised her grateful hands to Heaven —

I am interrupted; Dr. Evelin is at the gate; he is come to my apartment, and desires me to accompany him to Lady Julia.

We

We found her still in a gentle sleep, composed as that of an infant; we approached the bed; Dr. Evelin took her hand, he stood some time looking on her with the most fixed attention, when, on my expressing my hopes from her sleep, "Madam," said he, "it is with horror I tell you, that sleep will probably be her last; nature is worn out, and seeks a momentary repose before her last dreadful struggle."

Not able to bear this, I left the room.—Bellville! is it possible! Can Heaven thus overwhelm with affliction, the best, the noblest of its creatures? shall the amiable, the reverend pair, the business of whose lives has been to make others happy, be doomed in age to bear the severest of all sorrows? to see all their hopes blasted in one dreadful moment? To believe this, is to blaspheme Providence. No, it is not possible: Heaven will yet restore her: look down, O God of Mercy ———

Dr.

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 165

Dr. Evelin is now with the wretched parents, breaking to them the danger of their child: I dread seeing them after this interview: yet he will not sure plunge them at once into despair.

She is awake; I have been with her; her looks are greatly changed; her lips have a dying paleness; there is a dimness in her eyes which alarms me; she has desired to speak a moment with Dr. Evelin; she would know how long he thinks it probable she may live.

Six o'Clock.

She is gone, Bellville, she is gone: those lovely eyes are closed in everlasting night. I saw her die, I saw the last breath quiver on her lips; she expired, almost without a pang, in the arms of her distracted mother.

She felt her approaching dissolution, of which she had been warned, at her own earnest request, by Dr. Evelin; she summoned us all to her apartment; she embraced us with the most affecting tenderness; she called me to her, and, giving me her picture for Colonel Mandeville, begged me to tell him, she, who murdered his son, died for him: entreated me to stay some time at Belmont, to comfort her disconsolate parents; conjured Emily to be a child to them, and never to let them miss their Julia.

She begged forgiveness of her wretched parents, for the only instance in which she had ever forgot her duty, and for which she now so severely suffered: entreated them to submit to the hand of Heaven, and not give way to immoderate affliction; to consider that, if they were about to lose a child, thousands were at that moment suffering under the same distress; that death

was

was the common portion of humanity, from which youth was not more exempt than age; that their separation was only temporary, whilst their re-union would be eternal: then, raising her blameless hands, prayed fervently to Heaven for them, implored their last blessing; and, turning to her agonizing mother, speechless with excess of sorrow, conjured her to reflect on the past goodness of Heaven, and the many years of happiness she had already past with the best of men; that this was the first misfortune she had ever known; then, embracing her fondly, weeping on her neck, and thanking her for all her goodness, pressed her to her bosom, and expired.

Let me draw a veil over the ensuing scene, to which words cannot do justice. With difficulty have we forced Lady Belmont from the body. I have left Emily Howard with the venerable pair, whose sorrow would melt the most obdurate heart; she

she kneels by Lady Belmont, she attempts to speak, but tears stop her utterance: the wretched mother sees her not; inattentive to all but her grief, her eyes fixed on the ground, stupefaction and horror in her look, she seems insensible of all that passes around her. Sinking under his own distress, and unable to support the sight of hers, my Lord is retired to his apartment. May Heaven look with pity on them both, and enable them to bear this blow to all their hopes!

Bellville! where are now all our gay schemes? Where the circle of happy friends?

How vain are the designs of man! unmindful of his transitory state, he lays plans of permanent felicity; he sees the purpose of his heart ready to prosper; the air-drawn building rises; he watches it with a beating heart; it touches the very point at which he aimed, the very summit of imagined perfection;

fection, when an unforeseen storm arises, and the smiling deceitful structure of hope is dashed in one moment to the ground.

Friday Morning.

Not an eye has been closed this night; the whole house is a scene of horror: the servants glide up and down the apartments, wildness in their look, as if the last day was come.

Scarce have we been able to keep life in Lady Belmont; she asks eagerly for her child, her Julia; she conjures us to lead her to her; she will not believe her dead; she starts up, and fancies she hears her voice: then, recollecting the late dreadful scene, lifts her expostulating hands to Heaven, and sinks motionless into the arms of her attendants.

Six o'Clock.

Worn out by her long watchings and the violence of her emotions, Lady Belmont is fallen into a slumber: it is now two days and nights since she has attempted rest. May that gracious God, who alone has the power, calm and tranquillize her mind!

Eight o'Clock.

I have been standing an hour looking on the breathless body of my angel friend: lovely even in death, a serene smile sits on that once charming face: her paleness excepted, she looks as if in a tranquil sleep: Bellville, she is happy, she is now a saint in Heaven.

How persuasive is such a preacher! I gaze on the once matchless form, and all vanity dies within me: who was ever lovely like her? yet she lies before me a clod of senseless

senseless clay. Those eyes, which once gave love to every beholder, are now robbed of their living lustre; that beauteous bosom is cold as the marble on the silent tomb; the roses of those cheeks are faded; those vermilion lips, from whence truth and virtue ever proceeded — Bellville, the starting tears — I cannot go on —

Look here, ye proud, and be humble! which of you all can vie with her? Youth, health, beauty, birth, riches, all that men call good, were hers: all are now of no avail; virtue alone bids defiance to the grave.

Great Heaven! Colonel Mandeville is at the gate; he knows not the cup of sorrow which awaits him; he cannot yet have received my Lord's letter. He alights with a smile of transport: the exultation of hope is in his air. Alas! how soon to be destroyed! He comes to attend the bridal-

day of his son; he finds him a lifeless corse.

The servants bring him this way; they leave to me the dreadful task — Bellville, I cannot go through it.

I have seen the most unhappy of fathers; I have followed him whither my heart shuddered to approach. Too soon informed of his wretched fate, he shot like lightning to the apartment of his son; he kissed his pale lifeless lips; he pressed his cold hand to his bosom; he bathed it with a torrent of tears: then, looking round with the dignity of affliction, waved his hand for us all to retire. We have left him to weep at liberty over the son on whom his heart doated, to enjoy alone and undisturbed the dreadful banquet of despair.

He has been now two hours alone with the body; not an attendant has dared to intrude

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intrude on the sacred rites of paternal sorrow. My Lord is this moment gone to him, to give him a melancholy welcome to Belmont.

Great God! What a meeting! How different from that which their sanguine hopes had projected! The bridal couch is the bed of death!

Oh! Bellville!—But shall presumptuous man dare to arraign the ways of Heaven!

TO COL. BELLVILLE.

TUESDAY Morning.

YOUR letter, my dear Bellville, gave me all the consolation it is possible to receive amidst such a scene of wretchedness and despair; the tender sympathy of pitying friendship is the best balm for every woe.

The delicacy with which you decline mentioning a subject so improper for the time, would encrease my esteem for you, if that was possible. I know the goodness, the tender sensibility of your heart, too well, to doubt your approving my resolution to give six months to the memory of my angelic friend, and the sad task of endeavoring to soften the sorrows of her parents. Her dying voice adjured me not
to

to leave them to their despair: I will not forget the sad task her friendship imposed.

The agony of Lady Belmont's grief begins to give place to a sorrow more reasonable, though, perhaps, not less exquisite. The violence of her emotions abates; she still weeps, but her air is more calm; she raises her eyes to Heaven, but it is with a look of patient resignation, which, whilst it melts my soul to behold, gives me hopes she will not sink under her afflictions. Lord Belmont struggles with his own grief, lest it should encrease hers; he attempts to comfort her; he begs her, with an irresolute air, to consider the hand from whence the stroke proceeded: unable to go on, his voice trembles; his bosom swells with unutterable anguish; he rises; he leaves the room; the tears trickle down his reverend cheeks.

These, Bellville, these are the scenes I have perpetually before my eyes.

Colonel Mandeville indulges his sorrow alone; shut up continually in his apartment, a prey to silent distress, he seems to fly from all human converse: if entreated, he joins our sad party a moment; he enters with a dejected air, his eyes are bent earnestly to the ground; he sits motionless, inattentive, absorbed in reflexion on his own misery: then, starting up, exclaims, "All else I could have borne," and retires to give himself up to his despair.

I am now convinced Emily Howard deserved that preference Lady Julia gave her over me in her heart, of which I once so unjustly complained; I lament, I regret, but am enough myself to reason, to reflect; Emily Howard can only weep.

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Far from being consoled for the loss of her lovely friend, by the prospect of inheriting Lord Belmont's fortune, to which after Colonel Mandeville she is intitled, she seems incapable of tasting any good in life without her. Every idea of happiness her gentle mind could form included Lady Julia's friendship; with her she wished to spend all her days; she was all to her tender Emily; without her she finds the world a desert.

She is changed beyond conception by her grief, a grief which has not a moment's intermission: the almost dying paleness of her cheeks is a witness of the excess of her affliction; yet this very paleness has a thousand charms; her distress has something in it unspeakably lovely; adorned by sorrow, she puts me in mind of what Young describes woman in general;

—— “ So properly the object of affliction,
“ That Heaven is pleased to make distress
“ become her,
“ And dresses her most amiably in tears.”

TUESDAY Evening.

Bellville, I have been walking in a little wilderness of flowering shrubs once peculiarly happy in Lady Julia's favor: there is a rose which I saw planted by her hand; it still flourishes in youthful bloom, whilst she, the fairest flower Heaven ever formed, lies cropped by the cruel hand of Death.

What force has the imagination over the senses! How different is the whole face of nature in my eyes! The once smiling scene has a melancholy gloom, which strikes a damp through my inmost soul: I look in vain for those vivid beauties which once charmed me; all beauty died with Lady Julia.

In this spot, where we have so often walked together, I give way to all the voluptuousness of sorrow; I recall those happy days which are never to return; a thousand tender ideas rush on my memory; I recollect those dear moments of confidence and friendship engraved for ever on my heart; I still hear the sweet accents of that voice, still behold that matchless form; I see her every moment before me, in all the playfulness of youth and innocence; I see her parents gazing on her as she passes, with that lively transport a parent only can know.

It was here her rising blushes first discovered to me the secret of her heart: it was here the loveliest of mankind first implored me to favor his passion for my sweet friend.

Pleased with the tender sorrow which possessed all my soul, I determined to indulge it to the utmost; and, revolving in my imagination the happy hours of cheer-

ful friendship to which that smiling scene had been witness, prolonged my walk till evening had, almost unperceived, spread its gloomy horrors round; till the varied tints of the flowers were lost in the deepening shades of night.

Awaking at once from the reverie in which I had been plunged, I found myself at a distance from the house, just entering the little wood so loved by my charming friend; the every moment encreasing darkness gave an awful gloom to the trees; I stopped, I looked round, not a human form was in sight; I listened, and heard not a sound but the trembling of some poplars in the wood; I called, but the echo of my own voice was the only answer I received; a dreary silence reigned around; a terror I never felt before seized me; my heart panted with timid apprehension; I breathed short, I started at every leaf that moved; my limbs were covered with a
cold

cold dew ; I fancied I saw a thousand airy forms flit around me ; I seemed to hear the shrieks of the dead and dying : there is no describing my horrors.

At the moment when my fears had almost deprived me of sense, I saw Colonel Mandeville approach ; I concealed from him the terrors of my soul, lest they should add to the sorrow which consumed him : he addressed me in a faltering voice, conducted me to the house almost without speaking, and leading me into the saloon —— Oh ! Bellville ! How shall I describe what I felt on entering the room ?

Is not Death of itself sufficiently dreadful, that we thus clothe it in additional terrors, by the horrid apparatus with which we suffer it to be attended ? The room was hung with black, lighted up to show the affecting objects it contained, and in the midst, in their coffins, the breathless bodies
of

of the hapless lovers: on a couch near them, supported by Emily Howard, the wretched mother wringing her hands in all the agony of despair. Lord Belmont standing by the bodies, looking at them alternately, weeping over his child, and raising his desponding eyes to Heaven, beseeching the God of Mercy to relieve him from this load of misery, and to put a speedy period to that life which was now robbed of all its happiness.

I approached Lady Julia's coffin; I gazed eagerly on her angel countenance, serene as that of a sleeping infant; I kissed her lifeless lips, which still wore the smile of innocence and peace. Bellville, may my last end be like hers! May I meet her in the regions of immortality! Never shall I forget her gentle virtues, or the delight I found in her friendship.

She

She was wrapped in a loose robe of white fatten: her head covered with a veil of gauze: the village maids, who laid her in the coffin, had adorned her with the freshest flowers; they stood at an awful distance, weeping her hard fate and their own: they have entreated to watch around her this night, and to bear her to-morrow to the grave.

I had stood some time looking on the dear remains of Lady Julia, when Colonel Mandeville took my hand, and leading me to the coffin in which his son's were deposited; "Lady Anne, said he, you have forgot your once favored friend, your once gay, once lovely Harry Mandeville. Behold all that death has left of the darling of a fond parent's heart! The graces of that form are lost, those lips have ceased to utter the generous sentiments of the noblest heart which ever beat; but never will his varied perfections be blotted from the mind of his father."

I approached

I approached the most lovely of men; the traces of sorrow were visible on his countenance; he died in the moment when he heard the happiness which had been vainly intended for him. My tears streamed afresh when I beheld him, when I remembered the sweet hours we had passed together, the gay scenes which hope had painted to our hearts; I wept over the friend I had so loved, I pressed his cold hand to my lips.

Bellville! I am now accustomed to horrors.

We have prevailed on the wretched parents to retire: Emily Howard and I have entreated to watch our angel friends till midnight, and then leave them to the village maids, to whom Lady Julia's weeping attendants insist on being joined.

I dread the rising of to-morrow's sun; he was meant to light us to happiness.

Thursday

Thursday Morning.

Bellville! this morning is come: this morning once so ardently expected: who shall ever dare to say, To-morrow I will be happy?

At dawn of day we returned to the saloon; we bid a last adieu to the loved remains; my Lord and Colonel Mandeville had been before us: they were going to close the coffins, when Lady Belmont burst wildly into the room; she called eagerly for her Julia, for the idol of her agonizing soul: "Let me once more behold my child, let me once more kiss those icy lips: Oh! Julia! this day first gave thee birth; this day fond hope set down for thy bridals; this day we resign thee to the grave!"

Overcome by the excess of her sorrow, she fainted into the arms of her woman; we took that opportunity to convey her from
this

this scene of terrors : her senses are not yet returned.

Thursday Evening.

What a day have I passed ! may the idea of it be ever blotted from my mind !

Nine o'Clock.

The sad procession begins ; the whole village attend in tears ; they press to perform the last melancholy duties ; her servants crowd eagerly round ; they weep, they beat their bosoms, they call on their angelic mistress, they kiss the pall that covers her breathless form. Borne by the youngest of the village maids — Oh ! Bellville ! never more shall I behold her ! the loveliest of her sex, the friend on whom my heart doated — One grave receives the hapless lovers —

They

They move on—far other processions —
but who shall resist the hand of Heaven!

Emily Howard comes this way; she has left the wretched parents: there is a wildness in her air which chills my blood; she will behold her friend once more; she proposes to meet and join the procession: I embraced the offer with transport—the transport of enthusiastic sorrow—

We have beheld the closing scene—Bellville, my heart is breaking—the pride of the world, the loveliest pair that ever breathed the vital air, are now cold and inanimate in the grave.

To Colonel BELLVILLE.

SUNDAY Morning.

I AM just come from chapel with Lady Belmont, who has been pouring out the sorrows of her soul to her Creator, with a fervor of devotion which a mind like hers alone can feel: when she approached the seat once filled by Lady Julia, the tears streamed involuntarily down her cheeks; she wiped them away, she raised her eyes to Heaven, and falling on her knees, with a look of pious resignation, seemed to sacrifice her grief to her God, or at least to suspend the expression of it in his presence.

Next Sunday she goes to the parish church, where the angelic pair are interred; I dread her seeing the vault, yet think she cannot too soon visit every place which must renew the excess of her affliction; she
will

will then, and not till then, find, by degrees, the violence of her sorrow subside, and give way to that pleasing melancholy, that tender regret, which, however strange it may appear, is one of the most charming sensations of the human heart.

Whether it be that the mind abhors nothing like a state of inaction, or from whatever cause I know not, but grief itself is more agreeable to us than indifference; nay, if not too exquisite, is in the highest degree delightful; of which the pleasure we take in tragedy, or in talking of our dead friends, is a striking proof; we wish not to be cured of what we feel on these occasions; the tears we shed are charming, we even indulge in them. Bellville, does not the very word *indulge* shew the sensation to be pleasurable?

I have just now a letter from my niece; she is in despair at this dreadful event; she sees the amiable, the venerable parents,
whose

whose happiness was the ardent wish of her soul, and from whom she had received every proof of esteem and friendship, reduced to the extremest misery, by the hand of him she loves: for ever excluded from Belmont, for ever to them an object of horror, she seems to herself guilty of their wretchedness, she seems to have struck the fatal blow.

Since Mr. Mandeville's death, she has left Lady Mary; whose tears, she fancied, were redoubled at her sight.

Nor is she less wretched on Lord Melvin's account: she is distracted with her terrors for his life; which is however safe by Mr. Mandeville's generous care, who, when expiring, gave testimony to his innocence.

You will oblige me by begging of Lady Betty to take her at present under her protection: it ill suits the delicacy of her sex and birth to remain in London alone and un-

unconnected: with your amiable mother, she cannot fail of being happy.

I had persuaded Lady Belmont to walk in the garden; she went with me, leaning on my arm, when, the door being opened, the first object that struck her sight was the pavilion raised for the marriage of her daughter, which none of us had thought of having removed.

She started, she returned hastily to her apartment, and, throwing herself on a couch, gave a loose to all the anguish of her soul.

Bellville, every object she meets will remind her of the darling of her heart.

My Lord and Colonel Mandeville are together; they are projecting a tomb for their lovely children: a tomb worthy the ardour of their own parental affection; worthy to perpetuate the memory of their virtues,
their

their love, and their wretched fate. How often shall I visit this tomb, how often strew it with the sweetest flowers !

Sunday Afternoon.

As I passed this moment through the saloon, I went mechanically to the window from whence we used to contemplate the happy group of villagers. Bellville, how was I struck with the change ! not one of the late joyous train appeared ; all was a dismal scene of silent unsocial solitude : lost to the idea of pleasure, all revere, all partake, the sorrows of their godlike benefactors : with Lady Julia, all joy has left the once charming shades of Belmont.

Lord Fondville is gone past with his bride, in all the splendor of exulting transport. Scarce can I forbear accusing Heaven ! the worthless live and prosper ; the virtuous sink untimely to the grave.

My

My Lord has ordered the pavilion to be removed; he will build an obelisk on the spot where it stood, on the spot once dedicated to the happiness of his child.

A stranger has been to-day at the parish church, enquiring for the grave of Mr. Mandeville; his behaviour witnessed the most lively sorrow: it can be no other than Mr. Herbert. I have told this to my Lord, who will write and ask him to Belmont, that he may mix his tears with ours; whoever loved Mr. Mandeville will be here a most welcome guest.

Monday Morning.

I have persuaded Lady Belmont to go out for an hour with me in my chariot this morning: we are to go a private road, where we are sure of not seeing a human being. Adieu!

To the Earl of BELMONT.

MOUNT MELVIN, WEDNESDAY.

My Lord,

IF my regret for the late dreadful event, an event embittered by the circumstances your last letter communicated to me, could receive any encrease, it certainly must from the generous behaviour of Mr. Mandeville, whose care for my unhappy son, when expiring, is a proof his blood was drawn from the same source as your Lordship's. Yes, he was indeed worthy the happiness you intended him, worthy the honored name of Mandeville.

Relieved, by the noble conduct of your lamented kinsman, from the fears I entertained for my son's life, my sorrow for the
miserics

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 195

miserics he has occasioned is only the more severe : I feel with unutterable anguish that my ancient friend, the friend of my earliest youth, is childless by the crime of him who owes his being to me: the blow his hand unwillingly struck, has reached the heart of the incomparable Lady Julia: I think of her angelic perfections, of the untimely fate which has robbed the world of its loveliest ornament, and almost wish never to have been a father.

Lady Rochdale and Louisa are in tears by me ; for ever excluded from Belmont, they look on themselves as exiles, though at home. The horrors of mind under which my son labors are unutterable ; he entreats to see Colonel Mandeville ; to obtain his pardon for that involuntary crime, which has destroyed all the happiness of his life.

Will you, my friend, once more admit us? Allow us one interview with yourself and Colonel Mandeville? I ask no more, nor will ever repeat the visit: I could not support the sight of Lady Belmont.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most faithful,

though wretched friend,

ROCHDALE.

To

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 197

To the Earl of ROCHDALE.

BELMONT, WEDNESDAY.

My Lord,

CONVINCED Lord Melvin is more unfortunate than culpable, it would be cruel to treat him as a criminal: I feel a horror I cannot conquer at the idea of ever receiving the visit your Lordship has proposed; but, conscious of the injustice of indulging it, I sacrifice it to our antient friendship, and only postpone, not refuse, the visit: I will struggle with the reluctance of my heart, to see the guiltless author of my misery, as soon as he is publicly exculpated from the crime he at present stands charged with: Colonel Mandeville must appear as his accuser: wretched as his hand has made me, justice obliges me to bear witness to his innocence: Lady Anne Wilmot, who

K 3

was

was present at Mr. Mandeville's dying declaration, is ready to confirm my evidence : Lord Melvin therefore has nothing to fear. The trial once past, I will endeavour to prevail on Colonel Mandeville and Lady Belmont, to make the same painful sacrifice to friendship, to which time and reason will, I hope, perfectly reconcile us; but your Lordship will, on a moment's reflexion, be convinced that, till this is past, it would be indecent in me to see Lord Melvin.

We are greatly obliged to Lady Rochdale and Lady Louisa; the time of whose visit their own politeness and sensibility will regulate; it is a severe addition to my wretchedness, that the family of my friend is so fatally involved in it.

Oh! Lord Rochdale! you are a father, and can pity us: you can judge the anguish to which we must ever be a prey; never more shall we know a chearful hour;
our

our lost child will be ever at our hearts : when I remember her filial sweetness, her angel virtues, her matchless perfections — the only view we had in life was to see her happy : that is past, and all is now a dreary wild before us. Time may blunt the keen edge of sorrow, and enable us to bear the load of life with patience ; but never must we hope the return of peace.

The shortness of life, and the consideration how much of our own is past, are the only consolations we can receive : it cannot be long before we rejoin our beloved child : we have only to pray for that ardently expected hour, which will re-unite us to all we love.

Why will man lay schemes of lasting felicity ? By an over-solicitude to continue my family and name, and secure the happiness of my child, I have defeated my own purpose, and fatally destroyed both.

Humbled in the dust, I confess the hand of Heaven: the pride of birth, the grandeur of my house, had too great a share in my resolves!

Oh! my friend!—but I consider the hand which directed the blow, and submit to the will of my God.

I am, &c.

BELMONT.

To

Lady JULIA MANDEVILLE. 201

To Col. BELLVILLE.

BELMONT, Sunday Morning.

I AM desired by my Lord to ask you hither, and to beg you will bring my niece with you. Lady Belmont joins in the request; her nobleness of sentiment has conquered the reluctance she had to see her; she has even promised to endeavor to bear the sight of Lord Melvin, but I fear this is more than is in her power; she fainted when the request was first made. Lady Mary is expected here this evening.

Bellville, you are coming to Belmont, once the smiling paradise of friendship. Alas! how changed from that once happy abode! Where are those blameless pleasures, that convivial joy, those sweet follies, which once gave such charms to this place?

For ever gone, for ever changed to a gloomy sadness, for ever buried with Lady Julia.

Lady Belmont struggles nobly with her grief; she has consented to see her friends, to see all who will hear her talk of her child: a tender melancholy has taken place of those horrors, which it was impossible long to support and live.

Colonel Mandeville is to stay at Belmont; they are to indulge in all the voluptuousness of sorrow; they are to sit all day and talk of their matchless children, and count the hours till they follow them to the grave. They have invited all who will join in tears with them; the coach is gone to-day for Mr. and Mrs. Herbert.

Emily Howard and I bend our whole thoughts to find out means to soften their sorrows; I hope much from your conversation, and the endearing sensibility of your soul;

foul; it is not by resisting, but by soothing grief, that we must heal the wounded heart.

There is one pleasure to which they can never be insensible, the pleasure of relieving the miseries of others: to divert their attention from the sad objects which now engross them, we must find out the retreats of wretchedness; we must point out distress which it is in their power to alleviate.

Oh! Bellville! But in vain does the pride of human wisdom seek to explore the counsels of the Most High! Certain of the paternal care of our Creator, our part is submission to his will.

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Lately Published,
The FOURTH EDITION
OF
L E T T E R S
FROM
JULIET Lady CATESBY,
To Her FRIEND
Lady HENRIETTA CAMPLEY.



